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HISTORICAL & LITERARY

MEMOIRS AND ANECDOTES,

SELECTED FROM THE

CORRESPONDENCE

OF

BARON DE GRIMM

AND

DIDEROT

WITH

THE DUKE OF SAXE-GOTHA,

AND MANY OTHER DISTINGUISHED PERSONS,

BETWEEN THE YEARS 1753 AND 1790.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

Second Edition.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. IV.

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HISTORICAL & LITERARY

MEMOIRS AND ANECDOTES.

PART THE SECOND.

January 1778.

ONE of the actions of all others the most worthy to be consecrated in the records of humanity, is that of the pilot Boussard. On the thirty-first of August last, at nine in the evening, a ship from Rochelle carrying a crew of eight men, with two passengers, approached the head of the Jetty at Dieppe. The wind was so impetuous that a coasting pilot endeavoured in vain four times to go out and direct its entrance into the port. Boussard, perceiving that the pilot of the ship made a false manœuvre, which placed it in great danger, endeavoured to guide it by means of the speaking trumpet, and by signals; but the darkness of the night, the roaring of the winds, the noise of the waves and the great agitation of the sea, prevented the captain hearing or seeing any thing, and the vessel running upon the shingles was wrecked about thirty toises above the Jetty.

Boussard hearing the cries of the unfortunate crew, who were in the utmost danger of perishing, in spite of all the representations made to him as to

the impossibility of giving them assistance, resolved to make an effort to save them, and ordered that his wife and children, who endeavoured to prevent him, should be carried away. He tied one end of a cord fast to the Jetty, and girding the other round his waist threw himself into the midst of the furious waves to carry cordage to the vessel by means of which the people might all be towed on shore. He approached the vessel, but was thrown back again to the shore by the mighty force of the waters. Many times was he thus repulsed and rolled with violence along the shingles, while he was surrounded by broken relicks of the ship which was going to pieces very fast. His ardour was not diminished; a wave carried him under the ship and he was concluded to be lost, when he soon re-appeared, bearing in his arms a sailor who had been thrown from the ship; he brought him on shore motionless and almost lifeless. At length, after an infinite number of vain attempts, he succeeded in conveying a cord to the ship, and those of the crew who had strength enough remaining, tying it round them, they were dragged on shore.

Boussard thought he had saved every soul on board. Exhausted with fatigue, bruised and battered with the blows and shocks he had received, he reached his home with difficulty, and there fell down in a swoon. He was just brought to himself, he had thrown up a vast quantity of sea-water, and was recovering his spirits, when he was told that a groaning was still heard on board the wreck. The mo-

ment. he learnt this, he seemed inspired with new strength, and breaking away from those who were about him ran to the sea, and was fortunate enough to save one of the passengers who from weakness had not been able to avail himself of the assistance given to his companions. Of ten men who were in the ship only two perished, and their bodies were found the next day. On this occasion the following letter was written by M. Necker to Boussard, agreeably to the orders of his Majesty.

" Brave Man!

" I did not know till yesterday, by means of " the Intendant, the courageous action you per- " formed on the thirty-first of August. I gave an " account of it to the King, who has ordered me to " express his high satisfaction, and to announce to " you on his part that he makes you a present of " a thousand livres, and gives you an annuity " besides of three hundred livres. I write with " orders to this effect to the Intendant. Continue " to succour others when you can, and put up " prayers for your good King who loves brave men " and delights to reward them.

" *Signed*, NECKER, *Director-General* " *of the Finances.*"

The courageous pilot received this letter and the rewards which accompanied it with the utmost gratitude, only expressing surprise that his action of the thirty-first of August should have made so much noise, since he had shewn the same zeal on many other occasions without ever thinking of any re-

ward, or receiving any. After paying his debts and buying new clothes for his wife and children, a thing which he had never been able to do before, he asked permission of the Intendant to go to Paris and thank M. Necker, and see if possible the young King *who loved brave men, and delighted to reward them.* He came hither in the sailor's dress which he bought for his wedding. He is a man whose commanding exterior recalls the idea of those ancient heroes of Homer, to whom the imagination of Bouchardon gives a stature of twenty feet. He is really near six feet high,* his head is small, his shoulders broad, and he walks with a firm step, although one leg is nearly lame from a wound received in his Majesty's service. He appeared before the Ministers, before all the great people of the Court, with the most modest simplicity, but with the most dignified confidence. He received the applauses lavished upon his courage, without suffering the least symptom of pride or vanity to escape him, and the very considerable presents which have been made him by all our princes, particularly by the Duke de Penthièvre, do not appear to have excited in him the least sentiment of avidity or selfishness.

As soon as the object of his journey was accomplished, all the attentions, all the caresses bestowed upon him, for he was quite the fashion, all the donations which he might still have expected, could not detain him; he evinced the utmost impatience to return to his family, and to his usual

* French feet of thirteen inches each.

mode of life. Some one having asked him who could have inspired him with an intrepidity so rare, he answered in these remarkable words: *Humanity, and the death of my father; he was drowned, I was not in the way to save him, and I swore from that moment to devote myself to the rescue of all whom I might behold in danger at sea.* Was ever a more pure, a more sublime homage offered to filial piety!—As the etiquette of the Court would not permit his being presented to the King, he was placed in a gallery through which his Majesty was to pass, when he, being advertised of the circumstance, looking at him as he went by, said: *Ah! there is the brave man!* Thus did his Majesty confirm with his own mouth, the title he had given him through his Minister.

Le Kain is no more. The inflammatory disorder which has deprived us of this ornament of our stage, is attributed to the efforts he made in the character of Vendome, to please a certain Madame Benoit, with whom he was passionately in love. There may have been actors with superior talents, Baron may have been more natural, Dufresne may have had a finer person, these are things we will not dispute;—but what appears to us indisputable is, that never did an actor conceive more thoroughly, and with more dignity, the true genius of tragedy, especially of French tragedy. Never did any one animate the character like him, seize all the emotions, all the effects of

which it was capable, preserve at once to the language all its loftiness, to the accents of nature all their truth, to the character its originality of colouring, to the passions all their fire and energy. His talents alone sufficed to embrace, to support all the march, all the unison of a piece. When Mademoiselle Gaussin quitted the stage, it was feared that we should never more see Zaïre, but Le Kain, with feeble actresses newly come out, has revived this piece a hundred times, and always with fine effect. The illusion of his character supplied every thing, and lent to all the others a new life, a warmth scarcely to be conceived. It is well known how little success Britannicus experienced when it was first performed. In these latter times there is scarcely any tragedy of Racine's, which has been more followed. It is to the character of Nero, which had hitherto been considered as merely a secondary one, that it has owed this transition; the art with which Le Kain represented the youth of a tyrant escaped for the first time from the trammels in which he had been held, produced an effect scarcely to be conceived.

If the difficulties this great actor had to surmount in arriving at such perfection, could not afford any addition to our pleasure, we are not the less bound from a sentiment of gratitude, from the admiration which the remembrance of him inspires, to cherish these circumstances in our recollection. Nature had refused him almost all the advantages which seem requisite to form a great actor. His

features were not regular, there was nothing of grandeur in them; his physiognomy at the first glance appeared vulgar and ordinary, his figure short and heavy; added to which his voice was somewhat drawling and wanting in flexibility. One only gift of nature supplied all these defects, and this was a great command over his countenance, so that the ugliness of his features was lost, under the charm of the expression which he could throw over them; an expression which precluded any thing else being seen, but the character and passion with which his soul was filled, and which gave him at every instant new forms, a new mode of being.

The arrangement of his hair, under an appearance of negligence, lent to the contour of his forehead, either more or less youth, more or less majesty according to the character he was to represent. He had in the movement of his eye-brows, a magic of expression peculiar to himself, and of which he made prodigious use. The art with which he studied every gesture, every attitude, and impressed upon them a character of nobleness and dignity, that enveloped, as it were, his whole figure, —the attention he paid to the perspective of the theatre, favoured the illusion. Faithful to the costume, which he, in conjunction with Mademoiselle Clairon, first introduced upon the French stage, he employed in his manner of dressing himself, all the art that the most skilful painter could exhibit in the disposal of his drapery. Through this

happy artifice he succeeded not only in hiding the defects of his figure, but he even gave it something grand and commanding. The man who in a private-room might be mistaken for a little shop-keeper of the street of Saint Denis, on the stage became a King, a Sultan, and might pass in the mind of Bouchardon himself for one of the heroes of Homer. I knew a foreigner who having never heard of Le Kain, and seeing him for the first time in the character of Zamora, quitted the theatre firmly persuaded that the actor he had been admiring, was one of the handsomest men ever seen. It is remarkable enough that Roscius, the greatest actor of ancient Rome, had the same natural disadvantages as Le Kain, that he had even greater, and yet surmounted them with such prodigious success. He was the first actor at Rome, that ever made use of a mask, and he did it because he was cross-eyed, but the people liked better that he should perform without his mask, because of the extreme sweetness of his voice.

It is also to the charm of his voice, that the modern Roscius is principally indebted for his success. We have remarked that it was rather drawling, yet by study he had so far corrected this defect, that there remained only a solemn and grave manner suitable to the dignity of his style of acting. I never heard any human voice, the inflexions of which were more sure and more varied, stronger and more tender, more pathetic, more touching, or more terrible. No verses ever appeared feeble, if

he would condescend to repeat them with care; a more precious talent, and which he carried to the highest degree possible, was that of making his auditors feel all the charm of the finest verses, without in the least injuring the expression. In rending the heart he always enchanted the ear, his voice penetrated to the bottom of the soul, and the impression he made, like that of the engraving knife, left deep traces and a lasting remembrance.

His conversation announced a discreet and reflecting mind, but he never uttered any thing like brilliant sallies; all his propositions were full of truth and well-measured; his language, mild and sweet, had often a dignified simplicity, and great energy without any affectation. He loved gaiety, and nobody was more sensible to the talents of his friend Preville, or to the *naïveté* of Carlin; but to laugh was a thing not the less wholly foreign to him; his physiognomy always preserved the impression either of those passions he had so much studied to represent, or of those he had experienced himself. He had never loved or hated, but with ardour, and when he pronounced this verse in Alzira:

Two virtues in my heart, vengeance and love;

he was more Zamora, than even Zamora himself. If circumstances often compelled him to bury these sentiments entirely within his own bosom, he was not the less devoured by them, nor can it be doubted but that this excess of sensibility contributed at

least in an equal degree with the fatigues of his profession to shorten his days. I judge by a consultation which he held with Doctor Tronchin, in one of his latter illnesses; a consultation as tragic, as full of warmth, and of philosophy, as any thing he had ever displayed upon the stage.

Occupied entirely with endeavouring to perfect himself in his art, he never sought things which might distract his attention; he was only sometimes led away by the warmth of his feelings. He neglected no opportunities of acquiring every branch of knowledge in any way connected with his profession: he had in consequence pursued a regular course of study in language, in history, and in all the arts which might contribute to embellish dramatic representations. His judgment was naturally sound and correct, but in order to give it its proper scope, he was obliged to pursue his ideas with great attention, to meditate profoundly upon them. I have often heard him say that he had been fifteen years studying the character of Cinna, before he understood it as he played it during the latter years of his life.

Whether it arose from avarice, as many people thought they had a right to suspect, whether it was from an affectation of singularity, or from a sort of coquetry, he affected in his common stile of dress, to be no less saving and negligent, than he was magnificent in his theatrical robes. Yet he never lost sight of what was due to society, but united with the modesty and attention be-

coming in his situation, that self-regard which constitutes true dignity. Every one knows the answer he made to an officer, who uttered before him some very contemptuous expressions with regard to actors, comparing their situation with that of a military man, who after a long and laborious service is constrained, at last, to retire upon a paltry pension: *How, Sir!* said Le Kain, *you do not reckon as any thing the right you have to talk to me in this way?*—He was only in his forty-ninth year.

It was on the eighth of February, that the sublime actor treated of in the last article, paid the great debt of nature, and it was the very next day, the day of his interment, that the patriarch of Ferney arrived at Paris, after an absence of more than twenty-seven years. Thus by a singular fatality, the latter never saw upon the theatre at Paris, the actor who beyond all dispute contributed the most to his glory, whom he himself had taken so much pains to form; but who never could obtain permission to make his first essay on the boards of the capital, till some days after the departure of his benefactor for Prussia.

No, the appearance of a phantom, of a ghost, of a prophet or an apostle, could not have excited more surprize and admiration, than the appearance of M. de Voltaire. This new prodigy has suspended for some moments every other subject of attention, it has superseded the rumours of

war, the intrigues of the long-robe, the bickerings of the Court, even the mighty quarrels of the *Gluckists* and *Piccinists*. Encyclopedian pride seems dwindled away at least in the proportion of one half, the Sorbonne has trembled, the Parliament has observed a profound silence, all literature is in motion, all Paris has hastened to the feet of the idol, and never would the hero of our age have enjoyed his glory with greater splendour, if the Court would have honoured him with a more favourable, or at least a less indifferent glance. Indeed a single word from the King upon this unexpected return, was near destroying at one stroke so sweet an intoxication. His Majesty inquired whether the order which forbade M. de Voltaire's returning to Paris, an order given under the Ministry of M. de St. Contest, had been reversed. Although he added nothing more, the question was eagerly reported to the patriarch, and reported in a manner to excite the greatest alarms. The sick old man was sensibly affected with it, but it had never been the King's intention to give him uneasiness, and, thanks to the assiduities of the Countess Jules de Polignac, supported by the Queen's kindness, all was soon satisfactorily explained. To comfort old age, to take an interest in the repose of the favourite of the Muses, are not these some of the sweetest occupations of Beauty and the Graces?

At eighty-four years of age M. de Voltaire has travelled to Paris in five days, in the month of

February. He set out from Ferney two days after his niece, Madame Denis, and M. and Madame de Villette, and joined them at Fontainbleau. The day after his arrival, he received the homage of all France, and answered the compliments paid him with that flow of vivacity, that amenity, that politeness of which he alone preserves the true tone. In the evening he read, or rather himself declaimed, the greatest part of his tragedy of Irene, and passed almost the whole night in correcting the last two acts. Madame Vestris, to whom he has assigned the part of Irene, coming to visit him in the morning, he said: *I have been occupied with you, Madam, all night, as if I had been only twenty years old.* These things, however, do not prevent his considering himself as dead, or dying; he is even angry when any one would assure him that he appears full of strength and life.

He, with Madame Denis, take up their quarters at the Hotel of the Marquis de Villette, that he may not be, as he says, separated from *Fair and Good*,—so he always calls Madame de Villette; this lady enjoys a very large share of his love and esteem. He has a little dressing-room, which resembles rather the chamber of voluptuousness than the sanctuary of the muses, and this dressing-room is directly under the apartment of M. de Thibouville,—Here he is to pass his Easter.

March 1778.

It is rare that the Carnival does not produce

some anecdotes worthy of record. That which has made the greatest noise this year deserves attention, not only from the rank of the persons whom it concerns, and from the importance of its consequences, but also from its demonstrating so forcibly how strong is the empire of opinion, under circumstances like those in question, over our customs and manners. We should on these accounts, be unpardonable, if it were passed over in silence; literary memoirs can have no objects more interesting to discuss than those which relate to the history of public opinion. This then is the fact in few words.

The Count d'Artois, under favour of the liberty allowed by a mask, and perhaps also, thanks to the secret hints given him by Madame de Canillac* who was leaning upon his arm, at one of the latter balls of the Carnival, permitted himself to say some things to the Duchess de Bourbon, of a nature which excited her impatience no less than her curiosity. The Duchess attempting to raise the beard of the mask, which tormented her with no little restraint, the Count defended himself by a very hasty movement, and making, at the same time, an effort to pull off the little mask which scarcely covered half the Duchess's face, he, in the struggle, gave her some slight scratches. This unfortunate scene was soon spread all over the town

* Madame de Canillac was formerly maid of honour to the Duchess of Bourbon, and was, at this time, in the service of Madame Elizabeth.

and the court, so that Madame de Bourbon thought she could not avoid presenting a formal complaint to his Majesty upon the subject, through the Prince de Condé and her father the Duke of Orleans. The Duke de Bourbon was, perhaps, somewhat too hasty in declaring warmly, that if the proper apologies were not made to his wife, it was easy to see the part he must take. The Queen endeavoured, in vain, to settle the affair; the negociations, however well-managed, were unsuccessful, and the authority of the King himself could only procure a forced reconciliation. The situation of the Count d'Artois was extremely embarrassing, for on one side, the King's orders against fighting were very strict; on the other, how was he to put up with the sort of menace uttered by the Duke de Bourbon? The women, of whom this Prince had hitherto been the idol, all now took part against him; the cause of Madame de Bourbon appeared that of all the sex, and consequently of almost all the nation. Their cries, their suffrages, the imperious voice of French honour, at length decided the matter against the very important considerations that opposed them, against the authority of the laws, against even the express commands of the Monarch. The Count d'Artois gave the meeting to the Duke de Bourbon in the *Wood of Boulogne* on the sixteenth. The conflict was carried on according to all the rules of ancient chivalry; they fought for five or six minutes, happily without any disastrous consequence. The Count d'Artois received

a slight scratch in the arm, and the affair was terminated to the satisfaction of all the parties interested. The two combatants dined together with the utmost gaiety and good humour. The Count d'Artois wrote immediately to the King, asking pardon for having disobeyed him, and earnestly requested that he would shew him no other favour than that the Duke de Bourbon should be treated exactly in the same manner with himself; he added that, however culpable his conduct might be in the eyes of the Monarch, he must venture to hope that it would find some excuse in the sentiments and the friendship of a brother. This duty fulfilled, the Count hastened to the Palace of Bourbon, and made the Duchess the most candid, the most dignified, and the most ample apology: "I avail myself, Madam," he said, "of the first moment that circumstances would permit, to make those apologies which I have regretted exceedingly it was not in my power to make before."

The very same day that this interesting scene passed at Paris, was the first representation of M. de Voltaire's new tragedy. Never was a more brilliant attendance seen. The Queen, and her whole Court, honoured with their presence this new triumph of our modern Sophocles. This triumph, so affecting after sixty years of glory, was preceded by that of Madame de Bourbon. She no sooner appeared in her box than the house resounded with acclamations and clapping of hands. The transports of the public were redoubled when

they perceived her husband and her champion. They were renewed again when the Count d'Artois appeared, and if, with not equal eagerness, it was because the audience were not all equally well instructed with respect to what had passed in the morning.

Thus has the voice of the public dared to sanction, in the most decided manner, an action forbidden by the laws, contrary to the established principles of the throne, and which the positive orders of the King had expressly prohibited. So true it is that the power of custom, or national prejudices, is above all human authority, all human controul.

M. de Saint Ange, translator of the Metamorphoses of Ovid, has, in his conversation and deportment, that languishing and mawkish air which has been sometimes remarked in the strain of his poetry. Having been, like every other member of the literary world, to pay his respects to M. de Voltaire, and being ambitious of concluding his visit with some stroke of genius, said, twirling his hat prettily between his thumbs: "I am only come "to day, Sir, to see Homer; another day I shall "come to see Euripides and Sophocles, afterwards "Tacitus, and then Lucian."—"*Sir*," answered Homer, "*I am very old, could you not make all "the visits at once?*"

"You have," said M. Mercier, at his visit, "so far surpassed your contemporaries of every

" kind that we trust you will surpass M. de Fonte-
" nelle in the art of living to a great age."—" *Ah, Sir, M. de Fontenelle was a Norman, he cheated even Nature!*"

May 1778.

It is not as a mere matter of form that M. de Voltaire took upon himself the function of Director of the French Academy. He neglects nothing to rouse the zeal and activity of his brethren, and it seems reserved for the genius of this truly illustrious old man, to renew the vigour and youth of a body which, notwithstanding its forty heads, has long been so feeble and so languishing. He is always the first at the assembly; he discusses the most interesting questions of grammar; he offers the most refined and most ingenious observations upon the necessity of reviving old expressions and creating new ones. *Our language*, said he the other day, *is a haughty beggar; the more she is in indigence, the more she seems to contemn the assistance of which she stands in need.* The memory and the presence of mind of our patriarch are far beyond any thing that could be conceived at his age. The Abbé Delille, having read him his satire *On Luxury*, imitated from the Epistle of Pope to Dr. Arbuthnot, he recollected almost all the verses of the English Poet, and pointed out, with extreme delicacy, the places in which the translator had fallen below his model, and those in which he had surpassed it.

At the last sitting of the Academy he spoke for a very long time, and with great warmth, upon the utility of compiling a new dictionary, nearly upon the same plan with that of Della Crusca, and with Johnson's Dictionary. He urged the matter so forcibly, that in spite of the opposition made by a majority of the members, it was agreed to undertake this great work. M. de Voltaire immediately entered the resolution with his own hand, in the register of the Academy, stating at large the motives which had given rise to it. He did more, he would not permit the assembly to separate without dividing among them the letters of the alphabet; he himself took A as being the most copious. M. de Foncemagne would fain have been excused from taking any part, on the plea of his age, but after many remonstrances he was constrained to yield. At the conclusion of the sitting, delighted with having carried his point, the director said to the members, *Gentlemen, I thank you all in the name of the alphabet.—And we,* answered M. de Chastellux, *thank you in the name of letters.*

Some one was talking about England before M. de Voltaire, "It is certain," said he, "that "in this island the sheep are fatter, the horses "run faster, the dogs hunt better; this may "justify the presumption that there is also some "superiority in the human species."—"Yes," answered some one, "I have remarked that the "spirit of the constitution influences every thing "in the country, even the physical nature of

" things. The flocks are suffered to wander about
" freely in their pastures without dogs, and without
" a shepherd."—" *Undoubtedly*," replied Voltaire,
" *but that is because there are no wolves.*"

June, 1778.

He has fallen into the fatal abyss! the last rays of that divine light are just extinguished, and the night which is about to succeed to this glorious day will endure perhaps for a long succession of ages!—The greatest, the most illustrious, perhaps, alas! the only monument of this grand æra in which all the talents, all the arts of human kind seemed to be raised to the height of perfection,—this superb monument has disappeared! A small spot of earth now conceals from us its sad remains.

He is no more!—that prodigy who was at once the Virgil and the Ariosto of France, who revived for us the master-pieces of Sophocles and Euripides, whose genius attained by turns the loftiness of thought of Corneille, and the pathetic sublimity of Racine, who, sole master of that empire over the stage, which was divided by these two powers, knew how to found another still more worthy of his genius, in the great movements of nature, in the terrible excesses of fanaticism, in the impressive contrast of manners and opinions.

He is no more!—that vast mind, which in its immense career embraced the whole extent of our knowledge, and left master-pieces and models in almost every species of writing; the first person

who made known in France the philosophy of Newton, the virtue of the best of our Kings, and the true value of liberty, commerce, and the arts.

He is no more!—the man who first thought of writing history as a philosopher, as a statesman, as a citizen. Who combated, without relaxation, all prejudices fatal to the happiness of mankind, and covering error and superstition with opprobrium and ridicule, knew how to make himself equally understood by the wise and by the ignorant, by kings and by the people.

It was on the thirteenth of the last month, between ten and eleven at night, that M. de Voltaire expired, at the age of eighty-four years and some months. The principal cause of his death appears to have been the strangury, from which he had been a sufferer several years; the fatigues he had gone through since he came to Paris, doubtless, hastened the progress of the disease. When his body was opened, the greater part of the *viscera* were found still in a perfectly sound state, but over the interior of the bladder a great deal of matter was formed, which must have occasioned excessive pain. By very great care his life might yet have been prolonged for a considerable time; but of that he was incapable. Having learnt that in a sitting of the Academy, at which he could not be present, the plan he had made these gentlemen adopt of a new Dictionary, had again experienced a great deal of opposition, fearful lest it should be abandoned, he determined on composing a speech, the object

of which was to confirm them in the project. In order to renovate his nervous system, which was somewhat shaken, he took a prodigious quantity of coffee. This excess, in his situation, united with his having laboured at his speech unremittingly for ten or twelve hours together, brought on a terrible accession of pain, and exhausted him to a frightful degree. Marshal Richelieu, who came to see him in the evening, said that his physician, in a similar situation, had ordered him to take a few drops of laudanum, which had quieted the pain immediately. M. de Voltaire instantly ordered some laudanum to be brought him, and during the night, instead of taking merely a few drops, took nearly the whole phial. From that moment he sunk into a kind of lethargy, which was only interrupted by excess of pain, and at intervals alone had the use of his senses.

It is well known that this great man regretted life exceedingly;—and who had more reason to regret it?—But it was not from the fear of death, and its consequences. He often deplored the impotence of medical assistance, but it was owing to the pain he suffered;—it was the desire of enjoying for a longer time that glory which was the fruit of his labours, not the remorse of a heart terrified by uncertainty with regard to the future, that drew from him these complaints and these repinings. A few hours before his death he was visited by the minister of St. Sulpicius, and the Abbé Gautier. He appeared, at first, to have

some difficulty in recollecting them. M. de Villette having announced them a second time, he answered, without any impatience: *assure these gentlemen of my respect.* At the entreaty of M. de Villette, the minister of St. Sulpicius approached the bed-side, when the dying man stretched out his arms as if to embrace him. In this attitude, the minister addressed several exhortations to him, and concluded by conjuring him to bear testimony to the truth in his last moments, and prove by some sign, at least, that he acknowledged the divinity of Jesus Christ. At these words the eyes of the sufferer appeared for a moment re-animated, he gently repulsed the minister, and said, with a voice still perfectly intelligible: *Leave me to die in peace!*—The minister then turning to the Abbé Gautier, said, with much moderation and presence of mind: *You see that his head is quite gone.* These gentlemen having withdrawn, he clasped the hand of the servant, who had attended upon him with the greatest zeal and care during his illness, called two or three times for Madame Denis, and in a few moments after expired.

It is certain, that the day and hour of M. de Voltaire's death were for some time not known to the Public. All Paris was at the door, to make enquiries concerning his health, after his body was absolutely removed in order to be transported to the Abbaye of Sellières. The orders given for his interment were enveloped in all the mystery which could have been employed upon the most import-

ant state concern; and indeed it must be confessed, that these precautions were perhaps not entirely without reason. It is believed, that it would have been very easy to have set the heads of those who surrounded the habitation of this celebrated man, the day after his death, into a ferment on either side.

It is not, however, to the prejudices of the court, nor to those of ministers, nor perhaps even to the intolerant zeal of the chiefs of the clergy that the difficulties raised, respecting the interment of M. de Voltaire, in consecrated ground, are to be principally ascribed. It is much rather in the absurd and pusillanimous conduct of his own family, in the intrigues of some devotees and the keepers of their consciences, that the origin of a persecution so contemptible and so scandalous is to be sought. Even supposing that a power existed of refusing to M. de Voltaire what is never refused to any citizen, if the ordinary course, pointed out by custom, and the laws had been followed, there was no one who would have dared publicly to raise his voice as the organ of the most odious fanaticism, or the most savage hatred. But some alarms of I know not what, some secret disquietudes, circulated under the specious mask of zeal and piety, having once got wind, fears of exciting a cry of scandal were awakened. It was then that the power and credit of the devotees began to shew themselves, and it was thought but right to take every possible means

of avoiding a discussion of which it is never easy to calculate the exact consequences. Although the secret chronicles of the Court assure us, that M. de Voltaire had the very strongest claims upon the friendship and regards of the Duke de Nivernois. it is said that Madame de Nivernois, and Madame de Gisors were the persons who, more than any others, excited the archbishop and the parochial clergy to refuse an asylum within their jurisdictions to the remains of this great man. We had rather impute this injustice to the blind zeal of a woman, who perhaps is not the less otherwise deserving of respect, than charge it to the account of a whole body from whose enlightened minds more charity and toleration were to be expected.

Resting upon the genius of the age which gave him birth, he alone in the decline of life supported the glory of that in which he died, he alone retarded awhile its fall. But he, alas! is no more, and already ignorance and envy dare to insult his revered ashes. He who deserved a temple and an altar is refused the repose of the tomb—is refused those simple honours which are not denied to the lowest of human kind. Fanaticism whose astonished genius trembled before that of this extraordinary man, scarcely sees him expiring, before she flatters herself with resuming her empire, and the first effort of her impotent rage is the excess of frenzy and meanness.

What do you hope from this act of barba-

rism?—What will you teach the universe in exercising your fury and vengeance upon these mortal remains, but the terror and alarm with which he inspired you to the last moment of his life? Behold then the extent of your power in these days!—One man alone, without any other support than the ascendancy given him by talents and glory, has for sixty years resisted your persecutions,—for sixty years has braved your fury, and it is only death which delivers up to you your victim;—a vain shadow insensible to your insults, but whose name is still revered by humanity, is still the dread of tyrants.

What could be your design in refusing a simple tomb to the man whom the nation had just decreed to be worthy the honour of a public triumph?—Did you fear that this tomb might become an altar, and the place that enclosed it a temple?—Did you fear to see confounded in the croud of human beings, the man who, by the superiority of his talents and genius, raised himself above all ranks? Did you think that it was highly for your interest to announce to all Europe that the greatest man of his age died as he lived, without weakness, and without prejudices?

Base and feeble enemies of the shade of so great a man, in tormenting all the powers of heaven and earth to snatch from him the homage which is so justly his due, what fruit do you expect from such vain efforts?—Can you efface his memory from the recollections of mankind?—Can you annihilate those

numerous proofs existing of the vast powers of his mind, those eternal monuments of his genius consecrated in every part of the world to the instruction and admiration of future ages?—Is it by puerile prohibitions, by impotent anathemas, that you hope to repel the torrents of light spread from one end of the universe to the other?*

No, his glory is raised above the possibility of its ever being attainted,—his works are the immortal guarantees of it. But your triumph is still great; the avenger of victims oppressed by fanaticism and superstition is no more; that great ascendancy attached to his person, to the particular character of his genius, to sixty years of glory and success, that ascendancy which has so often made you tremble is no longer to be feared. Public opinion, the homage of all men of talents, of the most distinguished persons of all nations, the confidence and friendship of many sovereigns, had erected for him a sort of tribunal superior to every other in the world, since reason and humanity alone dictated its code, since genius pronounced all its decrees. It is before this respectable tribunal that more than once the thunders of injustice, of calumny, and of superstition have died away; it is there that the innocence of a Calas, a Sirven, a La Barre, was fully

* The players were forbidden to act M. de Voltaire's pieces till further orders, the editors of the public papers to speak of his death in any terms, either favourable or unfavourable, and the preceptors at the colleges to suffer any of their scholars to learn his verses.

established and avenged. The hope of re-establishing the memory of the unfortunate Count de Lally, a hope which he saw near being accomplished, was the fruit of his last cares, was the last effort for which his life, almost extinguished, appeared to revive again. A few days before his end, when he was plunged in a sort of lethargy, he was roused from it for some moments on learning the news that judgment had been passed in this affair, and the last lines he ever dictated were addressed to the son of this unfortunate man. *The dying man revives a moment on hearing this great news; he embraces M. de Lally tenderly; he sees that the King is the defender of justice; he dies content.* Such were, it may almost be said, the last sighs of this celebrated man.*

A rumour has been in circulation for some weeks past that the *Memoirs* or *Confessions of Jean Jaques Rousseau,* were about to appear; that the work had been printed in Holland, and that two copies of it were actually in Paris; many persons even pretended that they had seen them. These rumours however are not confirmed; nor has it been possible to trace them to their source. What

* The Marquis de Villeville who had been for many years the intimate friend of Voltaire, and who scarcely ever quitted him during his stay at Paris, has promised to furnish us with a detailed account of all the circumstances of his illness and death. We wait for the fulfilment of this promise to give to the Memoirs which we have collected upon the subject all the exactness and precision which the recital of so interesting an event deserves.

we know from good authority,—what Rousseau himself said some time ago to some persons of my acquaintance is, that he had mislaid the manuscript; which was a thing not at all surprising for him to do, as nothing was very safe with him. What we know with equal certainty is, that he has since said to one of our common friends, that the work was not lost; whether he had found the copy that was mislaid, or that he had two, remains to be known. He added that he had deposited it in the hands of an academician of whose probity no one could have the least doubt. It is said that this academician is M. de Malesherbes.

No opportunity is ever lost at Paris to put forth a *jeu-d' esprit*. Of all the new pieces performed of late at the Comic Opera none has had such brilliant success as the *Judgment of Midas*. In the first act Apollo descends from the clouds, and this gave occasion for a wit in congratulating the author upon the applause his production had received to say: *Your piece, Sir, has descended from the clouds; and most assuredly it will re-ascend to them.*

July 1778.

M. de Voltaire being extremely ill with the consequences of his hæmorrhage, pressed M. de La Harpe very earnestly to read to him his new piece called *The Barmecides*. The Author excused himself for a long time, saying: "A piece of this kind will only make you sad, it may excite emotions

which will be too powerful."—" No, no," answered M. de Voltaire, " the pleasure of listening to fine verses will be the last enjoyment of my life."

The opinion generally established respecting the nature of Jean-Jaques Rousseau's death has not been destroyed by a letter which we shall have the honour of sending you respecting this event from M. Le Begue de Presle, his friend, an eminent physician at Paris.* The public persist in believing that the philosopher shortened his own days by poison. What we know for certain is, that during his stay in England, and ever since, he has been subject to frequent fits of melancholy accompanied with an extraordinary kind of convulsions, in which state he has been many times on the point of destroying himself. His embarrassments, which had become greater than ever, the uneasiness he felt from the pretended publication of his *Memoirs*, whether they had been pilfered from him, whether he had himself consigned them to the press, or whether he was only alarmed at the reports spread upon the subject; the neglect into which he had fallen owing to his own peevish and wayward temper,—all

* M. Le Begue de Presle was a physician, and Censor Royal. He was most truly the friend of Jean-Jaques Rousseau, and took a great interest in his health. Some time before his death he went to see him at Ermenonville, and found him coming up from the cellar as if it was a great fatigue to him; when asked why, at his age, he did not deputé that task to Madam Rousseau?—*What would you have me do?* he replied, *when she goes there, there she stays.*

these things had evidently affected his mind very deeply. With a heart naturally distrustful and suspicious,—the victim of a strange and cruel persecution,—soured by misfortunes, which he had perhaps entirely brought upon himself, but which were not the less real,—tormented by an imagination which exaggerated all his affections as well as all his principles,—still more tormented by the teazings of a wife who, in order to preserve a complete ascendancy over his mind, contrived to keep his best friends at a distance in awakening his suspicions against them,—his soul at once too strong and too weak to support tranquilly the burden of life, saw nothing around him but phantoms and precipices destined solely to annoy and injure him. There is no great distance undoubtedly between such a disposition of mind and madness, and scarcely can any other denomination than actual insanity be applied to the persuasion which had long taken possession of his mind, and on which he dwelt much more eagerly for the last few months, that all the powers of Europe had their eyes fixed upon him, considering him as a monster dangerous to society, and who ought to be strangled. He had taken it into his head that a very powerful league was formed against him, the chiefs of which, at Paris, were the Duke de Choiseul, Doctor Tronchin, M. d'Alembert, and M. de Grimm; a strange mixture of persons. He could never pardon M. de Choiseul the conquest of Corsica; it was undertaken, he said, to do him an ill turn, and prevent his forming a code of laws for

that island, as he had been requested to do by General Paoli. It was also to mortify him, that the Emperor of Germany, the Czarina, and the King of Prussia combined to dismember Poland, because he was occupied with reforming the ancient constitution of that kingdom.

If he thought that he had great cause of complaint against the sovereigns and the misnisters of Europe, it was still worse with the philosophers: the priests, which seems a little extraordinary, were those by whom he considered himself as the least hated. He was firmly convinced that an attempt had been made to raise the populace of Paris against him. He never went out of his house that he did not believe he met people posted about as spies, ready to seize the first opportunity that presented itself to stone him. No one was in a situation too humble to be the object of his suspicion; even the shoeblacks, at the corners of the streets, he thought refused to do the office for him, which they courted from every body else. All these things have been related to us by one who was tenderly attached to Rousseau and deeply affected with the state in which he saw him—one for which there appeared no hope of a cure. On objects unconnected with this mania, his mind preserved all its native strength and energy. He had been for some years occupied in compiling a *Dictionary of Botany*; but it is not known at present, exactly, of what the manuscripts, left by him, consist*.

* The *Dictionary of Botany* has since been published.

His port-folio was formerly entrusted to M. du Peyron of Neufchâtel; it contained a poem after the manner of the *Death of Abel*, upon the massacre of the Sechemites; a beginning of the continuation of Emilius; the translation of some books of Tacitus; a plan of reform for the kingdom of Poland: some operas, among others one entitled *The Muses*, and a collection of songs. It is asserted that there are in existence three or four manuscript copies of his *Confessions*, the most considerable of his works; one is said to be in England, and two, at least, at Paris; it appears certain that M. de Malesherbes has one.

Is it not a fatality worthy of remark, that in the space of a few months, France has lost the only rival of Garrick she could boast, Le Kain; one of her most celebrated sculptors, Le Moine*, Voltaire and Rousseau; that Switzerland has,

* Le Moine, the ancient director and rector of the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture, executed the equestrian statue of Louis XV, at Bordeaux, the pedestrian one at Rennes, the monument to Cardinal Fleury, the principal altars in Saint Jean de Grève, and in the chapel of Saint Sauveur, and a great number of busts. His figures are not always as chaste and correct as might be wished, but they are always extremely spirited and display much fire and imagination. He is reproached with having endeavoured to encroach in his art upon the boundaries of painting, its sister and its rival, and not to have felt sufficiently that either of these arts, when it would intrench upon the province of the other, necessarily loses a part of the character proper to itself, and fails of producing the full effect of which it is capable, from the very nature of the efforts to make it produce a greater.

within the same period, lost the Baron de Haller, one of the most learned men in Europe, and the first German poet to whom foreigners have rendered justice, and M. Heidegger, the most illustrious and most virtuous of her magistrates*; while Sweden has lost the first botanist of the universe, the Chevalier Linnæus; and England that venerable citizen†, whose patriotism raised his country to the highest degree of splendour, and who could not survive the reverses which his wisdom had but too plainly foreseen. So many rare talents, so many virtues, so much illumination, carried, within so short a time, into the regions of darkness, may well create some alarms to the ministry of the dark empire, if that ministry bears much resemblance to others.

Doctor Franklin talks little, and in the beginning of his stay at Paris, when France still

* M. Heidegger was Burgomaster of Zurich. Nothing was wanting to him but a larger field of action, to have had his name enrolled in the same rank with the names of Pericles and Aristides. All Switzerland was governed, for a long time, by the influence of his genius, and no one had a greater share than himself in the last treaty made with France, the only one in which there was no other object in view but the mutual interest of both nations; the only one, perhaps, in which the negociations were conducted with the decency and dignity suitable to a state, which, though confined within narrow limits, is not the less a sovereign and independent power.

† The great Earl of Chatham, who it is well known, was seized with his death stroke in the House of Lords, as he was making a last effort to prevent coercive measures being employed against America.

refused to declare herself openly with regard to the colonies, he talked still less. At a dinner of *beaux-esprits*, one of these gentlemen in order to engage the Doctor in conversation, said to him: *It must be owned, Sir, that America presents at this time a grand and superb spectacle. Yes,* answered the Doctor, modestly, *but the spectators do not pay.* They have paid since.

A very fine Latin verse has been composed for Dr. Franklin's picture,

Eripuit cœlo fulmen sceptrumque tyrannis.

It is a happy imitation of one in the Anti-Lucretius,

Eripuitque Jovi fulmen Phœboque sagittas.

Many sayings have been recorded of Louis XIV full of loftiness and grandeur. The following is less known, but not less worthy to be remembered. M. d'Harcourt, in giving an account of certain sums of money which had been entrusted to him to gain the Spaniards, declared to M. de Torcy, that he had a hundred thousand crowns remaining. The minister answered, he had no doubt of the use that would be made of it by the King, adding that he should lose no time in communicating to his Majesty so rare an instance of disinterestedness. Louis XIV appeared much affected by it, and said to M. de Torcy, *I will have these hundred thousand crowns carried to the Royal Treasury for the honour of my reign.* He afterwards loaded M. d'Harcourt with dignities and honours. The spirit which reigns

among our ministers, at present, is well calculated to revive the recollection of such kind of deeds.

Extract from the Journal of Paris of Monday, the sixth of July; inserted under the head of Miscellaneous Articles.

Jean-Jaques Rousseau, citizen of Geneva, whose death was announced in our paper of yesterday, had intended, for some time, to quit Paris. Yielding to the intreaties of friendship, he established himself, the latter end of May last, in a small house belonging to the Marquis de Girardin, Lord of Ermenonville, situated near the *château.* On Thursday last, the second of this month, he had an attack of apoplexy, when he returned from his walk. It continued for two hours and a half, and then carried him off.

The Marquis de Girardin took upon himself the care of performing the last offices to his remains. The body, after having been embalmed and enclosed in a leaden coffin, was interred on Saturday the fourth, in the park of Ermenonville, on a spot called the *Island of Poplars,* in the midst of the *Small Lake,* which lies to the South of the château. It was deposited in a tomb raised to the height of about six feet, and handsomely decorated. M. Rousseau was born the twenty-eighth of June, 1712.

LETTER *upon the Death of* JEAN-JAQUES ROUSSEAU, *written by one of his friends to the Authors of the* JOURNAL OF PARIS, *but never inserted there.*

Paris, July 12, 1778.

You announced, Gentlemen, in your Journal, of Sunday, the fifth of this month, under the head of *Miscellaneous Articles*, the death of Jean-Jaques Rousseau. Permit me to observe, Gentlemen, that nothing ever merited more truly to be classed among *Events*, than the death of one of the most pure and correct writers of his age, of a philosopher whose love of true wisdom never relaxed for a moment, of a man who consecrated all his talents to extending the boundaries of those moral qualities which most truly ornament the soul, who never ceased endeavouring to render man more virtuous and more happy.

Much has been said of Jean Jaques Rousseau without knowing him, and as an account of his death has been given without knowing the circumstances of it, I send you the following particulars, which I request you, Gentlemen, to publish. They are so much the more interesting, as they may serve for an answer to every thing that has been said, and may perhaps again be repeated, against this great man.

Rousseau had, within about a month, yielded to the earnest intreaties of the Marquis and Marchioness de Girardin,* and retired to Ermenon-

* M. and Madame Girardin are a couple united in the most perfect friendship. Whoever knows them cannot fail of entertain-

ville, where he lived with his wife, in a small house, near the chateau, but separated from it by some trees, and joining to a little wood; thither he went every day to take his walk, and gather plants, which he afterwards arranged in his *Herbarium*. Sometimes he made little parties of music with the family of M. de Girardin, and he had already attached himself so much to one of the children, about ten years old, that from the unwearied pains he took with him, it seemed as if he meant to make him his pupil. On Thursday, the second of July, he rose at five in the morning, his usual hour of rising in summer, apparently in exceeding good health, and took a walk with this child; several times in the course of it he sat down for a few moments, saying, that he felt himself not well. He came home about seven o'clock, alone, and asked his wife whether the breakfast was ready?—"No, my good friend," she answered, "not yet."—"Well," said he, "I will go into "the wood, call me when breakfast is ready, I

ing the most profound respect and veneration for them. Perhaps there do not exist, any where, gardens more interesting or arranged more ingeniously than those of Ermenonville; they were laid out after the designs of M. Morel, author of a book, entitled, *The Theory of Gardens*. The house, which Jean Jaques occupied in this delightful spot, was called *Rousseau's Hermitage*, before it was inhabited by him. The wood, close by, is full of inscriptions from the *Nouvelle Héloise*; and on the little *Island of Poplars*, where now repose the ashes of Rousseau, was before that a very interesting monument, consecrated to the memory of Julia. Ermenonville is ten leagues from Paris.

" shall not be far off." After a while Madame Rousseau called him, he came in and took a dish of coffee, and then went out again. A few moments after he returned—eight o'clock struck.—" Why " have you not paid the locksmith's account?" he said to his wife. " Because," she said, " I wish " you to look it over and see that there is nothing " wrong."—" No," said he, " I believe the smith " to be an honest man, I dare say all his charges " are just, take the money and pay him."

Madame Rousseau took the money and went down stairs, but had scarcely got to the bottom of the staircase, when she heard her husband moaning. She went up hastily, and found him sitting in an arm chair, supporting his head with his hand, and looking very pale. " What is the matter," she said, " are you ill?"—" I feel," he replied, " pains like the cholic." Madame Rousseau then pretending she was going to look for something, went to the porter and begged him to send word to the château, that her husband was not well. Madame Girardin hastened immediately to the house, and by way of a pretence, that her visit might not appear to have any thing alarming in it, asked whether they had not been woke by the music which had been playing before the château during the night. Rousseau answered, with great calmness, " I see, Madam, that you are not really " come on this account. I am very sensible of " your kindness, but I am not well and must " intreat the favour of being left alone with my

" wife, to whom I have many things to say." Madame Girardin immediately took her-leave, when Rousseau desired his wife to lock the chamber door and sit down by his side, upon the same chair. She sat down, and enquiring how he found himself, " I feel," he said, " a shivering all over me, " give me your hands and try to warm me." She began to rub him. " How pleasant," he said, " is " this warmth, you revive me, but my cholicky " pains nevertheless increase, they are very severe." " Will you take any thing to ease them?"—" My " dear wife, do me the favour of opening the " windows that I may have the pleasure of behold- " ing Nature once more. How lovely she is—how " pure and serene is the day. O Nature! thou art " grand indeed!"—" But my good friend, why do " you say all this?" said Madame Rousseau, weeping.—" My dear wife," he answered, tranquilly, " I have always prayed God that I might " die before you, my prayers are heard. Look at " that sun, the smiling aspect of which seems to " call me—contemplate that immense body of " light, it is God—God himself, who opens his " bosom to receive me, who invites me at length " to taste that eternal, unalterable peace, I have " so long desired. Do not weep, my dear wife, " you have always wished to see me happy, and I " am going to be so. Leave me not an instant, " I conjure you, I would have you alone remain " with me, I would have you alone close my " eyes."—" My friend, my good friend, calm these

" apprehensions and let me give you something; I " hope this will prove nothing but a slight indis- " position."—" I feel, as it were, pointed needles " stuck into my breast, which cause me violent " pain. My dear wife, if I have been the occa- " sion of much uneasiness to you, if in uniting " your fate to mine, I exposed you to misfortunes " which you would otherwise never have known, " I ask your pardon."—" It is I, my good friend, " it is I, on the contrary, who ought to ask pardon " for the moments of uneasiness I may have cost " you."—" Ah! my wife, it is a happiness to die " when one has nothing wherewith to reproach " one-self!...Eternal Being! the soul that I am " going to render up to thee is as pure at this " moment as it was when it came forth from thy " bosom—grant that it may enjoy the utmost " felicity with thee!—My wife, I had found in " M. and Madame Girardin a most kind, a most " tender father and mother—tell them that I " revere their virtues, and am grateful for all their " kindness. I charge you to have my body " opened after my death, by persons of skill, and " to have an exact minute taken of the state in " which every part is found. Say to M. and " Madame Girardin, that I intreat them to permit " my remains to be deposited in their garden, I " have no choice as to the place."—" My good " friend you torture me! let me intreat you in the " name of the attachment you bear me, to take " some remedy."—" Well, if it will give you

" satisfaction. Ah! that was a terrible stroke in " my head!—Being of Beings! God!" He clasped his hands, he remained for some time with his eyes fixed on the heavens—" My dear wife, let us " embrace each other—assist me to walk." He endeavoured to rise from his seat, but his weakness was extreme. " Lead me to my bed," he said. His wife supported him with difficulty to the bed, where he laid for a few minutes in silence, and then desired to get up again. She assisted him, when he fell down in the middle of the room drawing her after him. She tried to raise him up, but found him speechless and motionless. She gave a violent shriek; those who heard her ran to her assistance, they broke open the door, they raised up the dying man; Madame Rousseau took his hand, he pressed hers, heaved a sigh, and expired. It was now just eleven o'clock.

Twenty-four hours after, the body was opened. The minute taken attests every part to have been sound, except a flow of cerosity in the brain, which was the sole cause of his death. M. de Girardin had the body embalmed and enclosed in a double case of lead, over which was a strong case of oak. In this state it was carried, attended by several friends, and two Genevese, on Saturday, the fourth of July, towards midnight, to the *Island of Poplars,* which at present bears the name of Elysium. M. de Girardin remained there till three in the morning, to see a building raised round it of sand and lime, over which is to be

erected a mausoleum to the height of six feet; the decorations are to be plain but handsome.

The island, now called *Elysium*, is indeed an enchanting spot. Its form is an oval of about fifty feet in length, and thirty-five in breadth. The water by which it is surrounded flows in perfect silence, and the wind seems always afraid of increasing its almost imperceptible motion. The lake is surrounded with slopes, which seclude it from all the rest of nature, so that an air of solitude and mystery is spread over the spot, which naturally dispose the mind to melancholy. These slopes are covered with wood, and at their feet are sequestered paths, where are now often to be seen wandering, and will be seen for a long time, people with hearts of sensibility looking towards Elysium. The soil of the island is a fine sand, covered with turf; there are no other trees upon it but poplars, and no flowers at this season but simple roses. It is there that the remains of Jean-Jaques Rousseau repose, the head turned towards the east.

You may be assured, Gentlemen, that all the circumstances here related are strictly facts. I learnt them, I impressed them deeply on my memory in the very chamber, on the very spot where Rousseau fell down and expired. I was alone with his widow; she is a good and simple-minded woman, nor can be suspected of having invented any thing. I have had the happiness of landing in Elysium, I have kissed the tomb of this celebrated

philosopher, whose extraordinary life, and sublime death have exalted my senses, and inspired me with the most profound veneration. It is there that I have said of him, while tears flowed from my eyes, what he said himself of his dear Julia:

The world knew him not while it had him.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen, your most obedient, &c.

The Friendships of Paris.

August 1778.

Figure to yourself Madame Du Deffand, blind, seated in her dressing-room in an easy chair which ressembles the tub of Diogenes, with her old friend M. de Pont de Vesle lolling in a *bergère* on the other side of the chimney. Such is the scene, such the actors, and the following is the substance of one of their recent conversations.

Pont de Vesle?—Madam?—Where are you? On the other side of your chimney.—Lolling in your chair with your feet upon the dogs as we should do with our friends?—Yes, Madam.—It must be owned that there are few friendships in the world of so old a date as ours.—Very true.—It has lasted fifty years.—Yes, more than fifty.—And in all that time no cloud has intervened, no shadow of a quarrel.—That is what I have always admired.—But, Pont de Vesle, has it not been because at bottom we were always extremely indifferent the one to the other?—That may very possibly be the case, Madam.

One of the best answers that could be made to the paradoxes of Jean-Jaques Rousseau upon the abuse of the sciences, would perhaps be in presenting the affecting example of men who have cultivated their minds and understandings with a great deal of care, without the simplicity of their manners and their habits being in any way altered. It is unfortunate that these examples have always been extremely rare. We have few phænomena of the kind equally interesting with that which has appeared for a moment on our literary horizon. He is a vine-dresser of Montereau, near Fontainebleau. Chance introduced him to the acquaintance of M. Senac de Meilhan, Intendant of Valenciennes, who recommended him to the Marshal de Noailles, and this latter sent him with the following letter to M. Marmontel.

" The Marshal de Noailles has the honour of " presenting his compliments to M. de Marmon- " tel requesting him to receive with kindness the " bearer of this letter. He is a simple vine-dres- " ser born with an excellent understanding, which " he has cultivated by reading the best authors. " He is quite the man of nature, and it will be in- " teresting to M. de Marmontel to see how much " natural good sense may attain without any edu- " cation, in consulting solely what is needful to " it. The good man, whom chance brought to " Paris, desires ardently to see and converse with " the author of *Belisarius*. This work has made " the strongest impression upon his mind, and

" he says that M. de Marmontel has only explained " his ideas. The Marshal de Noailles will be " happy to hear M. de Marmontel's opinion of " him. He informs him that Pope is one of this " man's favourite authors, and that he is very well " read in the Roman History, and in the History " of France."

Our new rustic Socrates is an old man, low in stature, but whose upright, though modest carriage, announces him still to have great strength and vigour. Age has whitened his head, but has not extinguished the fire of his eyes; all his features express the candour, the mildness, the serenity of his soul. The following is the substance of two conversations held with him at the house of M. de Marmontel. The sieur Linguet has given an abstract of them in the last number of his *Annals* with an incorrectness which does no honour either to the goodness of his taste or the integrity of his heart, and which proves strongly how little dependence can be placed upon the exactness of the correspondents he has selected at Paris.

At the vine-dresser's first visit he was asked what his principal studies had been?—He answered Plutarch, Montaigne, Pope, and some works of history, among which he particularly admired Sallust; he also mentioned *Belisarius*, and said that this work was quite after his own heart.—Had he read Voltaire?—Yes, I have read the good parts; but tell me, Sir, how can any one misuse great talents in such a way?—Have you

any books?—I have none of my own, but I can sometimes get them lent to me.—He drew from his pocket the *Essay on Man*, it was almost worn out with having been so often read. It is from this book, said he, that I have gained the little talent I possess.

Being invited to dinner the next day, he accepted the invitation. At table he appeared cheerful but was extremely temperate, not forward in conversation, but at his ease, and saying nothing that was not perfectly à propos. He was asked how old he was?—I am seventy-nine.—Have you any children?—I have seven.—Are they well instructed?—I attempted to instruct them, but they did not answer my endeavours; with one alone did I succeed tolerably.—Are you in easy circumstances?—I live by the labour of my hands. (In fact his hands bore evident traces of hard and continued labour.)—Has your wife the same taste for reading that you have?—No, she understands nothing but her domestic concerns, and I am very glad of it. Women are not calculated to be instructed unless they have very superior minds, and that happens rarely; science overpowers them and deprives them of common sense.—How came you to be known to the Marshal de Noailles?—I have not the honour of knowing him personally, but M. Senac de Meilhan had the goodness to recommend me to him.—How did you become acquainted with M. Senac?—I went to his country house to speak to one of his peasants, when by

chance I fell in with M. Senác himself, and he did me the honour of conversing with me for some time and inviting me to dine with his upper servants; after dinner he sent me a good coat and some good linen. When I found his people stripping me, indeed, said I, this is being among a troop of corsairs of quite a new species.—And you accepted the cloaths M. de Senac ordered you without making any difficulties?—Yes, Sir, Pride may be endured in the rich, but is intolerable among the poor; I accepted M. de Meilhan's kindness with pleasure and gratitude. There happened to be a wedding in the house that day, and they made me open the ball with Madame de Meilhan.—What brought you to Paris?—I came to sell some effects belonging to the inheritance of a man who had made me his executor.—Do you intend to make any stay?—I shall return as soon as my business is finished.—Where are you lodged?—I am at the house of M. de Meilhan.—Have you been to any of the theatres?—Once; I was carried to see *Amphytryon*.—Were you pleased with it?—A King made a c——— by a God is not a thing to my taste.—

As he seemed somewhat overpowered with sleepiness after dinner, he was persuaded to go into a small inner room where there was a couch, and to lie down; he did so, but rejoined the company again in a quarter of an hour.

He was asked which of all the great men of antiquity he esteemed the most highly?—Scipio.—

But Pompey?—I scarcely ever knew how to determine that point. If there were many persons equally undecided in the world it would be a misfortune to the human race.—And what think you of Augustus?—To this he answered in the words of Jean Baptiste Rousseau: "In vain the rapid "destroyer of Mark Anthony and Lepidus filled "the universe with horrors, never would he have "had the name of Augustus without that just and "happy reign which occasioned his fury to be for-"gotten."—Which of our Kings do you prefer?—Louis the twelfth, for he was good and it is not without reason that he was called the *Father of his People.*—And Henry the fourth?—He was a great warrior; if he had not been prematurely killed, he might have been a great man.—And Louis the fourteenth?—You know the memorable words which dying he addressed to his successor, then a child.—And Louis the fifteenth?—Ah! let us not speak of that.—You admire *Belisarius* very much?—Very much indeed.—Is it that you concur in sentiments with that book?—It explains my ideas—You think then that Titus, Trajan, and the Antonines are in heaven?—Where can you suppose them to be; they did so much good in the world?—How! Marcus Aurelius is not in hell?—The good Marcus Aurelius in hell! he would convert all the devils.—But religion orders you to believe that all those people are damned?—No, no, Sir, *religion* does not order it.—Don't you know that the sentiments of *Belisarius*

have been very much condemned?—They who condemn them are wrong, what occasion is there to damn so many people? If so much good company is sent to hell, it will make people desirous of going thither.—You think perhaps that the Turks and Chinese, if they act well, will also be saved?—And why not? I like the honest people of those countries better than the rogues of ours.—Do you, with these sentiments, ever hope to go yourself to Paradise?—Ah, Sir! (and here he raised his hands and eyes to heaven, his eyes being moistened with tears) you would have great difficulty to persuade me that I shall not go to paradise; it is my inheritance.—You think then that God wishes to save you?—It is for that reason alone that he brought me into the world.—You believe him to be very good?—If he were not good he would not exist; he is goodness itself; look at his works.—You are not afraid of death?—No, Sir, I look towards it without trouble and without fear.—Is the holy virgin an object of your devotion? do you invoke her in your prayers?—Yes, Sir, women are no less powerful in heaven than onearth, especially if they are handsome.—You think her the mother of God?—I never permit myself to examine such questions.—You seem to love women?—They are the master-work of the hand of God. All the rest of his works would have been otherwise useless; if he had not made woman he would have left his work unfinished.—What think you of Atheists?—They are madmen.—Yet Plu-

tarch and Montaigne whom you admire so much—Did not go that length.—Are you considered with distinction in your own town?—Very little, Sir.—On what terms do you live with the other vine-dressers?—Very fair.—Instructed as you are you can scarcely have any pleasure in talking with those who cannot understand you?—Pardon me; I do not talk to them of what I have read; I talk good plain sense to them, and that they understand perfectly well.—What do you think of your minister?—He is a good kind of man, but no great genius.

One of our best poets M. Rouche being present, he was requested to repeat some of his verses. He complied, and selected for recital a passage in which he draws a picture of the condition of husbandmen. The vine-dresser listened to him with admiration, two streams of tears flowing down his cheeks all the time. When the poet had concluded, some one remarked: *What fine verses!* The vine-dresser answered: *You call them fine, Sir, I call them sublime!*

As this conversation was much talked of by those who heard it, a general wish was excited to see the vine-dresser; people wanted to get him into society. M. de Meilhan foreseeing the consequences of this eagerness, settled upon him a pension of a hundred and fifty livres, and sent him back to Montereau, to pursue the cultivation of his vines, and finish the remainder of his days there in peace.

Supplement to the Anecdotes of Madame Geoffrin.

Some one shewing Madame Geoffrin the magnificent house of the farmer general Bouret said: "*Did you ever see any thing more superb, or in a more exquisite taste?*"—"*I should have nothing at all to say against it,* she answered, *provided Bouret was the sweeper of it.*"

Whether from malice or inattention, one who was in the habit of lending books to the husband of Madame Geoffrin, sent him several times in succession the first volume of the *Travels of Father Labbat.* M. Geoffrin with all the composure possible, always read the book over again without perceiving the mistake. "*How do you like these Travels, Sir?*"—"*They are very interesting, but the author seems to me somewhat given to repetition.*"—He read Bayle's Dictionary with great attention, following the line with his finger along the two columns. "*What an excellent work,* he said, *if it were only a little less abstruse.*"—"*You were at the play this evening, M. Geoffrin,* said one, *pray what was the performance?*"—"*I really cannot say, I was in a great hurry to get in and had no time to look at the bill.*"—However deficient the poor man was, he was permitted to sit down to dinner, at the end of the table, upon condition that he never attempted to join in conversation. A foreigner who was very assiduous in his visits to Madame Geoffrin, one day, not seeing him as usual at table, enquired after him: "*What have you done, Madam, with the poor man whom I al-*

ways used to see here, and who never spoke a word ?" —" *Oh, that was my husband !—he is dead.*"

Madame Geoffrin had made considerable offers to M. Rulhière to throw his manuscript upon Russia into the fire. He represented to her very eloquently that this would be, on his part, one of the basest and most unworthy actions possible. To all this grand display of honour, of virtue, of sensibility, which she heard with great attention and patience, she made no other answer than : *Must you have more ?*—M. de Rulhière related this anecdote himself the other day before the Count de Schomberg, who struck with admiration at the penetration shewn by Madame Geoffrin, and totally forgetting that the historian was present, exclaimed : *That is indeed sublime !*

M. Suard, of the French Academy, is the person who has been employed hy the house of Rochefoucauld, in superintending the new edition of the *Maxims*. This new edition, from the Royal Press, has been conducted with the extremest care, it is upon very fine paper, and with a beautiful type, but has no kind of superfluous ornament. It may be cited as a model of typography, of simplicity, and of good taste. But this is not its only merit, it is printed from the original manuscript of M. de La Rochefoucauld, and a copy of the first edition corrected by his own hand. A great number of *Thoughts* omitted by former editors, or unknown to them, are here restored ; they

are ranged in the order which the author himself had given them, and the want of connection is supplied by a short and convenient table. What will render this edition still more rare and precious is, that only a certain number of copies are printed which have all been distributed among the family; not one has been sold.

The *Maxims* are preceded by a notice concerning the character and writings of the Duke de La Rochefoucauld, which appears so good, that I cannot forbear transcribing a passage. "The moment when the Duke de La Rochefoucaüld entered the world was a moment of crisis in the national manners. The power of the great, diminished and restrained by the vigorous and despotic administration of Cardinal Richelieu, was still endeavouring to maintain a struggle against the authorities, but to the spirit of faction, that of intrigue had been substituted. Intrigue was not however at that time what it is at present; it attached itself to manners of greater strength, and was exercised upon objects of greater importance. It was then employed to render the agent either necessary or formidable; at present it confines itself to flattering and pleasing. It then gave activity to the mind, it brought forward courage and talents, it even gave occasion for the exercise of virtues; it requires nothing in these times but suppleness and patience. It then aimed at something noble and commanding, it was the dominion of

" power; at present, petty in its views as in its
" means, vanity and fortune are at once its en-
" gines and its aim. It then tended to unite men,
" it now tends to insulate them. More dangerous
" then, it embarrassed the administration, and
" checked the progress of a good government;
" at present, favourable to authority, it tends
" only to debase the mind, and degrade the man-
" ners. Then, as now, women were the princi-
" pal instruments employed in it; but love, or
" what is honoured by that name, had a sort of
" lustre which even at this moment we can scarcely
" help feeling; it was somewhat ennobled from
" being mingled with the great interests of am-
" bition. Instead of this, the gallantry of our
" days, degraded in itself from the petty interests
" with which it is united, degrades in its turn
" both ambition and the ambitious.

" The *Maxims of Rochefoucauld* prepared the
" way for Helvetius, for Hume, for the deeply-
" thinking author of the *Social System*. It is
" not so much a mere book of *Maxims*, as a col-
" lection of observations upon the human heart.
" They are single remarks made with great pene-
" tration, expressed sometimes in a manner too
" general, too concise, but the first glance of
" which is almost always no less just than it is
" penetrating and keen. I agree that it is a work
" which, in reading it, may be called dry and sad;
" it dissipates pleasing illusions, but it may also
" preserve us from the most fatal snares, and I

" know of few equally calculated to form the " mind to observation, and to good conduct. " This work is to morals what an excellent col- " lection of anatomical dissertations is to the me- " dical science; such dissertations are not very " enlivening but they are extremely useful."

While M. Necker passes decrees which cover him with glory, and will render his administration eternally dear to France;—while Madame Necker, renounces all the sweets of society to devote herself to the establishment of a Hospital of *The Charity*,* their daughter, a girl of twelve years old, but who already evinces talents above her age, amuses herself with writing little comedies after the manner of the semi-dramas of M. de Saint Mark. She has just completed one in two acts, entitled the *Inconveniencies of the Life led at Paris*, which is not only astonishing for her age; but which appears even very superior to her models. It is a mother who has two daughters, one brought up in all the simplicity of rural life, the other amid the grand airs of the capital. The latter is the mother's favourite from the talents and graces she displays, but this mother falling into misfortunes from the loss of a law-suit, she soon learns

* In the parish of Saint Sulpicius. The minister who has just been consecrating it, did not fail to compliment the foundress of the institution with the tribute which her zeal merited. But to expiate the homage paid to the virtues of a h tic he terminated his discourse by the most ardent prayers for her conversion. This was perfectly fair.

which of the two is in reality the most deserving of her tenderness and affection. The scenes of this little drama are well connected together, the characters are well supported, and the development of the intrigue is natural and full of interest. M. Marmontel who saw it performed in the drawing-room at Saint Owen, the country house of M. Necker, by the author and some of her young companions, was affected even to tears.

Letter from the Empress of Russia to Madame Denis. The whole is in her Imperial Majesty's own hand-writing, and on the outside she has written as the direction:—*To Madame Denis, niece to a Great Man who loved me much.*

Petersburgh, October 15, 1778.

I just learn, Madam, that you consent to place in my hands the precious deposit your Uncle has left you; that library which hearts of sensibility will never be able to see without remembering that this great man knew how to inspire his fellow creatures with the spirit of universal benevolence, which all his writings, even those of mere amusement, breathe.—And why?—because his own soul was most deeply penetrated with it. No one before him ever wrote like him, and to future generations he will be both a model, and a rock on which they will split. To equal, or in one word to be M. de Voltaire, genius and philosophy must be combined with most extensive knowledge, and the happiest talent for entertaining others. If I

have shared with all Europe, Madam, in your regrets for the loss of this incomparable man, you have a right to participate in the gratitude I owe him for his writings. I am extremely sensible to the esteem and confidence you evince for me; it is most flattering to find these sentiments hereditary in your family. Your noble conduct towards me, ought to be your assurance of the sentiments I entertain towards you. I have charged M. de Grimm, to remit to you some trifling testimonies, which I hope you will accept.

Signed CATHERINE.

Letter from Mademoiselle d'Eon to the Count de Maurepas.

February 8, 1779.

MONSEIGNEUR,

I should not think of interrupting for a moment the time you sacrifice so entirely to the happiness and glory of France, but animated with the desire of contributing to them myself as far as my humble station will permit, I find myself compelled to make the present application. Permit me, Sir, to represent to you respectfully, though strongly, that my year of noviciate as a female being expired, I find it absolutely impossible to pass on to profession; the expense is too great for me, and my revenue is too small. As a female I can be of no use in the service of my King, neither can I be of any to myself or my family, and a sedentary life destroys the elasticity both of my body

and my mind. From my early years I have led a life of the greatest activity, both while I was occupied in the military service, and in the political; repose is absolute death to me.

I must then, Sir, renew my entreaties that you will procure me the King's consent to remain in the military service, and as there is no war by land, I wish earnestly to go as a volunteer on board the fleet of M. d'Orvilliers. In obedience to the orders of the King and his Ministers, I have submitted quietly to remain in petticoats during the time of peace, but in a time of war it is impossible. I am ill with chagrin, and ashamed of the idea of resting idle at a time when I might serve my King and Country with the zeal, the courage and the experience that God and my labours have given me. I am no less ashamed than mortified at consuming quietly in Paris, during a time of war, the pension which the late King condescended to grant me. I am ever ready to sacrifice to his august grandson both my pension and my life.

Assist me, Sir, I entreat, to quit the state of lethargy in which I am at present plunged, which has been the only cause of all my ills, and which afflicts all my protectors and friends, both warriors and politicians. I ought, farther, here to observe, that it deeply concerns the glory of every part of the family of the Count de Guerchy, that I should continue in the military service: at least this is the opinion of the whole army, of all France, and I will venture to say, of all the enlightened

part of Europe. A contrary conduct will be subject to the most mortifying interpretations, and will furnish ample food for the malice of society. I have always thought and acted like Achilles: *I never make war upon the dead, nor do I kill the living unless they have first attacked me.* You may have written attestations as to my conduct in this respect in what concerns the past, and I give you my word of honour as to the future. Your numerous and important occupations occasion you to forget, Sir, a promise which you made me fifteen months ago, that I should be well provided for, if I would obey the King and assume the female dress. I have obeyed completely, I am not provided for, and I surely may hope from a minister so great and good as M. de Maurepas, that he will condescend to keep his promise and replace me *in statu quo.* He knows not that I maintain my mother and my sister, with my brother-in-law and three nephews in the King's service. That I have many debts in London, that my library and papers are all in that capital, and that I am obliged to pay twenty-four livres a week for my rooms there, though at the same time I am not paid here what still remains legally due to me from the Court. After having served the late King to his satisfaction both in my military and diplomatic capacity, from my youth to the day of his death, I am not yet in a situation to furnish my family house in Burgundy, so that I can go and inhabit it. The Count de Maurepas should feel that my

silent obedience ought to have great merit in his eyes; that in my feminine situation I am in want, notwithstanding the kindness of the late King; a kindness which would be ample to a Captain of Dragoons, but which is wholly insufficient for my maintenance in the situation which I have been compelled to take upon me. He must also be well aware that the most stupid and nonsensical of all situations is that of a single woman about the Court, while I might yet aspire to being a lion in the army. I returned into France under your auspices, Sir, therefore I recommend my case with confidence to your protection, and shall be, all my life, with the deepest acknowledgement, yours, &c. &c.

(Signed) D'Eon.

Circular Letter sent by Mademoiselle d'Eon, to several of the great Ladies about the Court, enclosing the foregoing.

Madam,

I earnestly entreat you to forward, with the King's Ministers, the success of my request made to the Count de Maurepas in a letter, the copy of which I enclose. It is that I may be permitted to serve as a volunteer in the fleet under M. d'Orvilliers, as I foresee that there will be less war by land this year than the last. You bear, Madam, a name familiarized with military renown; as a woman you must be zealous for the glory of our sex. I endeavoured to support it during the war in Germany, and by negociations in different Courts for

twenty-five years; it only remains for me to fight by sea in the Royal Fleet. I hope to acquit myself in a manner that will give you no cause to regret having taken, under your protection, her who has the honour to be,

With the most profound respect, &c.

(Signed) D'Eon.

Mademoiselle D'Eon having given an extremely ill-judged publicity to these two letters, and having, at the same time, shewn about a genealogy of her family in which are included many names of distinction little desirous of any connection with her, has been exiled to her seat near Tonnerre.

M. de La Fayette returned from America a few days ago. It is no part of our plan to give an ascount of the news he may have brought respecting the actual state of the transatlantic countries, but I think you will not be displeased at my relating an anecdote from his journal, which has no connection whatever with politics, and which appears to have so much originality as to deserve being recorded.

This officer being employed in a negociation on the part of the Congress, with the savages of I know not what Canton in America, a brother officer who accompanied him observed a young Indian woman, whose beauty he thought rendered her a conquest worthy of his assiduities. He paid her, therefore, great attention, but for a long time his homage was received with the utmost

coldness. One evening, however, he announced to his friends, with great delight, that he flattered himself he was, at last, on the point of obtaining the fruit of his labours, since his *enamorata* had begged of him a trinket that hung to his watch, and had appeared extremely gratified at the eagerness with which he gave it to her. The next day a grand festival, after the manner of the country, was to be celebrated. Our young Frenchman did not doubt that this was to be the day of his triumph; but judge of his surprize, and of the inclination to burst into a hearty laugh which must have seized his companions, when almost the first object that presented itself to their eyes, was this trinket hanging to the nose of the tallest and handsomest savage in the assembly.

March 1779.

The day has at length arrived in which for the first time we have seen the chair of M. de Voltaire, at the French Academy, occupied by his successor. It was on Thursday, the fourth, that M. Ducis, secretary in ordinary to Monsieur, took his seat there. Never did a public meeting of the Academy draw together such a concourse of people; every corner of the hall was even more crouded than the pit at the theatre, on the first performance of a new piece. The doors were forced two or three times, in spite of the guard, and several persons were carried away from the croud who had been in the utmost danger of suffocation.

And yet, whatever reason there might appear to expect that such an audience would be very tumultuous, the most profound silence was observed from the moment that the recipient began his speech. The first applauses of the assembly were addressed to Madame Denis, who with all her family, was placed in the nearest tribune to the right; M. and Madame de Villette were the next noticed. Madame Denis was decorated with all the rich presents which have been bestowed upon her by the munificence of a sovereign equally worthy to receive the homage of genius, and to do honour to the memory of great men.

To say that the speech of M. Ducis was nothing but an eulogium of M. de Voltaire, and that the orator did not appear in any way below his subject, is sufficient to designate it as the finest speech from a new member that has ever been heard since the establishment of the Academy. It must, however, be acknowledged that, when printed, it did not altogether answer the impression made by it at the delivery. On a calm examination, faults were perceptible which, in the first instance, were lost amid the dazzling brilliance of the colouring, and a manner of speaking full of energy and grandeur. Several of the analyses, for example, ran into too great a subtilty, there was a superabundance of similies, some of the figures approached too near to the gigantic, and many of the periods, from their prolixity, were obscure and fatiguing; in short, if the truth is to be plainly spoken, there was alto-

gether too much of that species of eloquence which M. de Voltaire used to call *Gallithomas**. The particular character of these defects, and still more that of the sublime beauties with which the work is filled, have left no doubt on the minds of well-informed readers to whose pen this panegyric ought to be ascribed. The piece in the delivery was received with the warmest bursts of applause, though even then some of my neighbours whispered to me very softly: *Optime Thomas! Optime!*

It was impossible from the indecent murmur which ran through the hall the moment the Abbé de Radonvilliers began to speak, to hear more than the first twenty lines of his harangue. The exordium was, indeed, not very well calculated to gain the voices of the company then assembled in the Lyceum. "*The homage often paid to the person of M. de Voltaire, it is yet more a matter of politeness to pay it to his memory.*" So wretched a phraseology formed a terrible contrast with the oration which had just before been so warmly applauded. The pious wish which this unfortunate orator afterwards expressed, "that "some friendly hand, by retrenching from the "works of M. de Voltaire every thing adverse to "religion, good morals, and the laws, might efface "the spots which tarnish his glory,"—was hissed without mercy. From this moment the audience

* M. de Voltaire, who did not very much love M. Thomas, was in the habit of frequently using the term *gallithomas*, instead of *gallimawfry*.

would not condescend to listen to any thing more; nay, the violent clapping of hands, when he had finished, was perhaps even more humiliating than the indifference and contempt shewn while he was speaking. His speech, however, so ill received in the delivery, was less severely judged when printed; his answer to the recipient without being a master-piece of eloquence, appeared sensible and reasonable. Some persons of talents even, and among them Madame du Deffand, extolled it as far superior to the speech of M. Ducis; such an opinion, however, ought only to be cited for the purpose of displaying to what a point taste may depend upon our habits and private partialities.

M. d'Alembert increased the interest of this meeting by a speech wherein he took occasion, in consequence of having presented busts of Voltaire and Molière, for the embellishment of the hall, to shew that though the productions of these two celebrated writers are of a kind extremely different from each other, yet there is, in many points, a striking resemblance between them. Both are indebted, above all things, for the influence they had upon the age in which they lived, to the merit of having first introduced upon the stage that interesting philosophy which offers us, by precepts put into action, the means of being at once wiser and more happy. Both have attacked, in their incomparable dramatic works, two of the most fatal scourges to society—fanaticism and hypocrisy; both, become the marks at which all the weapons of

satire and hatred were aimed, obtained from enlightened governments the protection they had a right to expect; Molière from a great king, Voltaire from a virtuous pontiff. It was in consequence of a brief from Benedict the Fourteenth, that Louis the Fifteenth permitted the representation of M. de Voltaire's tragedy of Mahomet and some other of his pieces.

The quarrels of the dancers at the Opera, under the direction of the Sieur de Vimes, have amused the court and town exceedingly. *The minister insists upon it that I shall dance,* said Mademoiselle Guimard; *let him look well to himself, or I may make him dance.*

One day the great Vestris, having made some very insolent answer to the Sieur de Vimes, the latter said: *M. Vestris, do you know to whom you speak? To whom I speak,* replied Vestris, *yes, to the farmer of my talents.* These mighty quarrels being talked of before the King, he said: *It is your own fault, gentlemen; if you ran after them less, they would be less insolent.*

The great event of all happened about a fortnight or three weeks ago. Young Vestris, who hitherto, by way of parenthesis, promises to equal his father in every respect, having absolutely refused to take his part in the ballet of Armida, upon what pretence I know not, received orders to repair to Fort l'Evêque. Nothing could be more pathetic, more affecting, than the parting scene

between the father and son. *Go*, said the *God of Dancing*, to his son in the green-room, *go, my son, this is the proudest day of your life. Take my carriage, and desire to have the apartments of my friend the King of Poland; I will pay every thing.** The Sieur Dauberval was carried thither the same evening for having uttered some very seditious expressions. This act of severity has made a great sensation, and had not the steps since taken been marked with the utmost wisdom and moderation, it might perhaps have been attended with more disastrous consequences to the Opera than the carrying off the two Counsellors, Blancmesnil and Broussels, at the time of the Fronde, occasioned to the Parliament.

Ever since this important epoch, assemblies have been held every day, deliberations have been carried on, respectful remonstrances have been drawn up, deputations have been dispatched to Versailles;—the first actors, the first actresses, the first dancers, both male and female, have been

* The amusing emphatical language, here employed by M. Vestris, recals to mind another circumstance of a similar nature. When young Vestris was to make his first appearance upon the stage, the *God of Dancing* arrayed in the grandest costume of the court, with his sword by his side and his hat under his arm, presented himself with his son before the assembled audience, when his godship, after addressing the pit in a short speech full of dignity, upon the sublimity of his art and the noble hopes given by the august heir to his name, turned with great state towards the young candidate for public favour: *Now, my son*, said he, *give a specimen of your talents to the public, your father is looking at you.*

menaced with suspension from their august functions; all has been confusion and dismay. Desirous afterwards to reconcile the letter of the law with their ambitious views, these gentlmen and ladies determined to insist upon being dismissed, or to require respectfully that their manager should receive a notification in due form that his services were no longer required. The first proposal would have been very readily assented to, but on the terms required by their agreement, that they should continue in the service a year after having signified their wish to retire. The chiefs of the factious were given to understand that, if this parody upon the conduct of the Parliaments was continued, it might have consequences which they did not expect; that his Majesty was already tired of their quarrels, and if they were pushed much farther they might draw upon themselves the whole weight of his indignation. They were made to feel that the greatest talents are no dispensation to their possessors from observing the submission due to public order and tranquillity; that the worst service which could be rendered them would be to yield to their wishes; that the glory of the country, in short, of which they professed to be such zealous supporters, ought to supersede in their minds all considerations merely personal.

A treaty, all the articles of which are not known to us, seems, at present, to have put an end to these important convulsions. We are as

sured that it is a Marshal of France,* formerly distinguished for his successful negociations with Spain, who has contributed the most to calm the minds of the belligerents, and reconcile the interests of the public and the advantages of the administration with the pride and delicacy of the great souls who form the corps of the Opera. May his cares secure the duration of so good a work.

One thing is very certain, that this great affair has been much more the subject of conversation at our suppers than the losses sustained by our commerce, the taking of Pondicherry, or the unfortunate expedition to St. Lucia. Our great politicians have contented themselves with observing, that if ever the staff of a Marshal of France be given to M. d'Estaing, *it will not be of the wood of St. Lucia.* Thus it is that a nation which is constantly producing things so sublime, easily renounces pleasures with which it seemed perfectly intoxicated, and braves, without effort, the greatest dangers.

> With happy follies rise above their fate,
> The jest and envy of a wiser state.

Anecdote of Petersburg. By M. Diderot.

April 1779.

There was, in that town, a female Opera dancer, by name La Nodin, an earnest Christian, a strict catholic, but not over-scrupulous in her moral conduct, and dispensing with herself very readily

* The Duke de Duras.

from going to mass. Several good and well-intentioned persons remonstrated with her warmly upon this subject, and said that, for the sake of her servants, her neighbours, and the people of the country, if not for herself, she ought to go sometimes to church. At length, in opposition to her habits of many years standing, she suffered herself to be persuaded, and went one day to mass;—at her return she found a dismissal from the Theatre. This did not contribute to increase her taste for the mass, and she returned to her former regime, which gave occasion to the same well-intentioned people to return to their remonstrances. In about eight or ten months therefore she went to mass a second time;—at her return on this occasion she found the doors of her house broke open and all her cloaths stolen. This event made her more out of humour with the mass than ever, and she suffered a year and half to elapse before she could be persuaded to go again. But one Christmas eve, her well-intentioned friends were so extremely importunate that at length she could resist no longer and went to the midnight-mass; at her return she only found the place where her house had stood, the house itself was reduced to ashes. At this spectacle she threw herself upon her knees in the middle of the street, and raising her hands and eyes to heaven, said: "I ask for-"giveness of thee, my God, for having attended "these three masses, thou knowest that it was "against my inclination, then pardon me!—I "swear never to attend another during the course

" of my life, and if ever I falsify my oath, I con-
" sent to be damned to all eternity."

Do not consider this as a tale; it is a fact which hundreds of persons of perfect credibility can attest. It is equally certain that La Nodin has hitherto strictly adhered to her oath, and that her well-intentioned importuners have suffered her to observe it in peace.

Since all those little atrocities published under the title of *Literary good turns*, are collected with so much avidity, would it not be just to publish with equal interest any strokes of generosity which do honour to letters, and to those by whom they are cultivated. Among this number may be cited the recent conduct of M. de La Harpe towards M. Dorat. The former, a short time since, received a letter signed *A Capucin*, in which he was requested to meet the writer in one of the most remote convents at Paris. M. de La Harpe, whose prudence was distrustful even of a *Capucin*, did not think proper to make any answer. In consequence he soon after received a second letter infinitely more pressing, and couched in terms which he thought obviated every reason for apprehension upon the subject; he therefore determined to undertake the mighty adventure.

The Monk did not fail to make himself known to the Academician by signs that he had indicated, and having led him to a place where they were perfectly private, he told him that he had been for-

merly secretary to M. Dorat, from whom he had experienced a great deal of injustice, but that he had in his hands the means of taking ample vengeance on him. "I have addressed myself to you," he added, "not knowing of any one more capable "of seconding my views, or more interested in "doing so." He then drew from his sleeve a large parcel of manuscripts, among which were many gross satires against the Academy, particularly against M. de La Harpe, and a correspondence with a married woman, which he said might be made the foundation of a very spirited and scandalous novel, such as would ruin M. Dorat's reputation entirely. All these manuscripts he said it was his intention to sell to a bookseller, with the reserve of some letters which he should find the means of remitting to the husband of the lady.

M. de La Harpe could not forbear evincing to the Monk the horror he felt at the idea of so much perfidy; and after urging, in the most forcible manner, every possible motive that suggested itself to make him abandon his purpose, quitted him. When he returned home however he thought he had not done enough, that he had resigned himself entirely to the first emotions of his sensibility, and that his duty demanded something more. He had observed that the want of money seemed to be one of the leading motives that swayed the rascal in his saintly garb, and he wrote to him to say, that having reflected farther on what he mentioned he wished he would let him examine the papers in question, for he

thought he could make use of them in a manner which would be more profitable and less hazardous to him. The artifice succeeded and in the course of the day M. de La Harpe received the parcel from the monk, carefully sealed up. He immediately sent it, as he received it, to M. Dorat, mentioning by what means it had come into his hands, and desiring no other proof of his gratitude than a solemn promise not to pursue in any way the wretch by whom the papers had been entrusted to him. All literary hatreds vanished at once before a procedure so generous; M. Dorat hastened to kiss the cheek which he had treated so ill in Freron's Journal, and from that time M. de La Harpe has always endeavoured to give his opinions of M. Dorat and his works in far milder language. Can men of letters after this with justice be accused of not being Christians?

Four Polish Noblemen having desired to see *Bagatelle*, a pavilion belonging to the Count d'Artois in the *Wood of Boulogne*, were shown about by one of the officers of this Prince's household. He was exceedingly surprised at seeing them stop on a sudden before one of the statues in the eating room, look at each other with great emotion, and then burst into tears. When somewhat recovered they told their guide that they had been thus deeply affected on contemplating that beautiful statue, which was the perfect likeness of a relation of theirs recently dead. The Count d'Artois hearing this immediately sent the statue as a present to them.

They desired afterwards to see the gallery of pictures at the Palais Royal, and here they shed torrents of tears at some of the best pieces of Correggio and Titian. At the Luxembourg they were quite in agonies at beholding some of the chefs-d'œuvres of Rubens. But this excess of sensibility appearing at last likely to occasion them some embarrassment, they were constrained to give it up. It is said that they propose making the *Tour of Italy* with equal enthusiasm, and it is supposed that they will at least swoon, if not expire with tenderness before the lovely *Venus de Medicis*.

M. de Saulx, the excellent translator of Juvenal, has just published a work entitled: *Of the passion of Gaming, from the oldest times to the present day.* It has for motto: *Non ut dessinat, sed ne vincat.* Among the number of anecdotes with which the work is loaded, none appear to merit being recorded so well as the two following.

A father required that a separation of property should take place between his daughter and her husband, the very day after the latter had won a hundred thousand crowns at play. He was intreated to defer the business: *No,* he said, *I would not have any one of my blood profit for a single moment from injustice, nor would I have my child die upon a dunghill.*—He had the separation dated from the day before, and the event justified what he had done.

The wife of a gamester came, with death in

her eyes, to seek her husband where he had been playing for two days. *Leave me*, he said, *I shall see you again perhaps.*—He did indeed come to her, she was in bed with her last child at her breast.—*Rise*, said he, *the bed on which you lie is no longer yours.*

Madame de Lalande, Marchioness du Deffand, born of the family of Vichi de Chamru, died at Paris the twenty-third of last month, aged eighty-four. She was beyond dispute one of the most celebrated women of the age for her wit and talents, and had been for a long time no less so for her beauty. Having lost her sight while she was still young, she endeavoured to console herself for the loss by collecting around her all the most chosen society of the town and the court; but the poignancy of her wit, the sallies of which it was impossible to repress, often deprived her of the friendship of persons whom it most behoved her to have retained. The late Mademoiselle de l'Espinasse, who was her companion for some years, quitted her in haste, and carried away from her the greater part of the literati who were at that time her visitors. The friend whom she had the happiness of retaining for the greatest length of time was M. de Pont de Vesle; we have elsewhere explained the reason why this friendship was so durable. The society which she could no longer collect at her own house, but which was indispensable to her even in her extreme old age; she sought elsewhere. At

more than eighty she supped out almost every evening, often in the country, and would sit up till three or four o'clock in the morning. We have several charming letters of hers to M. de Voltaire, a portrait of Madame du Chatelet, some pieces of fugitive poetry printed in different collections, and many *jeux-d'esprit* full of keenness and satire.

Her best friends, Madame de Luxembourg, Madame de Choiseul, and Madame de Cambise scarcely ever quitted her during her last illness; in the excess of their attachment they never ceased playing at *Loto* every evening in her chamber till she had breathed her last sigh. She never would hear either of confession or of receiving the sacraments. All that the minister of her parish, who visited her in virtue of his office, could obtain after the most earnest exhortations was, *that she would confess herself to her friend the Duke de Choiseul.* It cannot be doubted that a confessor so judiciously chosen, granted her, with the best grace possible, absolution for all her sins, without excepting even an epigram she once made upon himself.

The unfortunate Prince Edward after being released from the Bastille, remained three years at Paris at the house of the Marchioness de Vassé, who lived at that time with her friend the celebrated Mademoiselle Ferrand, at Saint-Joseph in the Fauxbourg Saint-Germain. The Princess de Talmont, with whom he was always desperately in love, inhabited the same house. During the day he was

shut up in a closet belonging to Madame de Vassé's chamber from which he went down at night by a little back staircase to the Princess's apartment. His evenings were commonly passed behind an alcove in the apartment of Mademoiselle Ferrand, where he enjoyed, without being perceived, the conversation of a very distinguished circle. He was often himself the subject of their conversation, when much good was spoken of him, as well as much ill, nor could the least suspicion be entertained that he was listening all the time. The existence of the Prince in this asylum, and the profound secrecy with which he was concealed for so long a time from the eyes of the whole universe, except three women who kept the secret so well, seems something like a prodigy. M. de Choiseul, some years after the prince's departure, hearing this extraordinary anecdote could not believe it. Being minister for foreign affairs he wrote himself to Madame de Vassé to enquire into the circumstances. She confessed every thing, even telling him that she was at length obliged to send the Prince away because of some scenes that had taken place between him and the Princess de Talmont, carried on with somewhat too great warmth of temper on both sides; though beginning with tenderness, they not unfrequently ended in blows. This fact we have from a particular friend of Madame de Vassé.

Some years ago M. de Monthion, who was distinguished by his zeal and probity in the superin-

tendance of the different provinces confided to his administration, being found by the Count d'Artois in the Queen's anti-chamber, leaning out at the window with his back turned to him, the Count took him for the taylor and snatched off his wig. M. de Monthion being just now made chancellor to the Count d'Artois, people have not failed to remind him of the above anecdote: *Yes*, said he, *the Prince has appointed me his Chancellor, because he knows more of my head than any body else.*

The Prince de Condé, as grand master, loses very considerable rights in the financial department by the new regulations which have been made for lessening the expenses of the king's household. Our punsters have not failed to observe on this occasion that the Prince is at *the head of the reformed, as has often been the case with his house.*

On Friday the eighteenth, at the performance of the ballet of Medea, which had been preceded by Iphigenia in Tauris, M. d'Estaing appeared for the first time at the theatre. He was in the private box of the Duke de Chartres, and remained for a long time concealed behind the pillar, but being perceived between the third and fourth acts of the tragedy, the public greeted him with loud applauses which were soon seconded by the cymbals, the trumpets, and all the warlike instruments in the orchestra. These applauses were redoubled in the ballet, as the sieur d'Auberval, who supported the character of

Creon, at the moment when the people of Corinth pay their homage to their new king, advanced to the front of the stage with a laurel crown in his hand, which he dropped at the Count's feet.

These testimonies of public esteem would have been still more flattering if they had not too much the air of being concerted between the Duke de Chartres and the Managers of the Opera; or if there had not been something bordering on the ridiculous in players and musicians being made the vehicles for displaying the feelings of the nation. Be this as it may, we know that the hero of Grenada has shewn discernment sufficient to appreciate these honours at their just value. He wrote the next day to the sieur d'Auberval: *If I were minister of the police I should punish you: as I am only M. d'Estaing I send you a hundred louis.* So modest an acknowledgment has in it no less magnanimity than simplicity.

Letter from Doctor Franklin to Madame Helvetius.

Mortified at the resolution pronounced by you so positively yesterday evening that you would remain single the rest of your life as a compliment due to the memory of your husband, I retired to my chamber. Throwing myself upon my bed, I dreamt that I was dead and transported to the Elysian Fields. I was asked whether I wished to see any persons in particular, to which I replied that I wished to see the philosophers.—There are two who live here at

hand in this garden, they are good neighbours and very friendly the one towards the other.—Who are they?—Socrates and Helvetius.—I esteem them both highly, but let me see Helvetius first, because I understand a little French, but not a word of Greek.—I was conducted to him, he received me with much courtesy, having known me, he said, by character some time. He asked me a thousand questions relative to the war, to the present state of religion, of liberty, and of the government in France.—"You do not enquire then," said I, "after your dear friend Madame Helvetius, yet she "loves you exceedingly; I was in her company not "more than an hour ago."—"Ah," said he, "you "make me recur to my past happiness which ought "to be forgotten in order to be happy here. For "many years I could think of nothing but her, "though I am at length somewhat consoled. I "have taken another wife the most like her I could "find; she is not indeed altogether so handsome, "but she has a great fund of wit and good sense, "her whole study is to please me. She is at this "moment gone to fetch the best nectar and ambro-"sia to regale me this evening; stay here awhile "and you will see her."—"I perceive," said I, "that your former friend is more faithful to you, "than you are to her; she has had several very "good offers but has refused them all. I will con-"fess to you that I love her extremely, but she is "cruel to me, and rejects me peremptorily for your "sake."—"I pity you sincerely," said he, "for she

" is an excellent woman, and has a very good un-
" derstanding. But do not the Abbé de La Roche
" and the Abbé M— visit her?"—" Certainly
" they do, not one of your friends has dropped her
" acquaintance."—" If you had gained the Abbé
" M— with a bribe of good coffee and cream
" perhaps you would have succeeded, for he is as
" deep a reasoner as Saint-Thomas; he arranges and
" methodises his arguments in such a manner that
" they are irresistible. Or, if by a fine edition of
" some old classic you had gained the Abbé de La
" Roche to speak against you, that would have been
" still better, as I always observed that when he
" recommended any thing my wife had a great in-
" clination to do directly the contrary."—As he finished these words the new Madame Helvetius entered, and I recognized her immediately as my former American friend Mrs. Franklin. I would have reclaimed her but she answered me coldly: " I was a good wife to you for forty-nine years and
" four months, nearly half a century; let that
" content you. I have formed a new connection
" here which will last to eternity."—Displeased with this refusal of my Eurydice I immediately resolved to quit the ungrateful Shades, and return hither into this fair world again to behold the sun and you. Here then I am, Madam, let us revenge ourselves.

Was it malignity, or sentiment, which made the ambassador of Naples say: *That since the Duke*

of Orleans could not make Madame de Montesson Duchess of Orleans, he had made himself M. de Montesson?

It is positively asserted that Achmet the fourth has had the Abbé Raynal's *Philosophical and Political History of the trade to the two Indies* translated into Arabic!

The Queen went within the last few days to visit the gardens of Ermenonville, accompanied by the whole Court, except the King. It is known that she stopped for a long time on the *Island of Poplars*, on that blessed island where repose the ashes of Jean-Jaques Rousseau, and the world would fain have persuaded itself (not that this is the creed of the Academy) that devotion to the memory of this saint and philosopher was the principal object of so august a pilgrimage. Glory like this however does not appear justly ascribed to his manes. The illustrious visitor examined the tomb very inquisitively; she thought the architecture simple and in an exceedingly good taste, and the scenery, by which it is surrounded of a mild, melancholy, and romantic character. Her attention then appeared directed to a variety of other objects, nor did she evince the least interest in the memory of the celebrated man to whom the tomb is erected.—How many hatreds and jealousies were tranquillized by her silence!

July 1780.

Not above two or three copies are remaining in Paris of a work entitled: *Rousseau Judge of Jean-Jaques, in Dialogues.* This work has for motto: *Barbaris hic ego sum, quia non intelligor illis.* Though unknown to the depositaries of the edition of the *Complete Works of Rousseau,* it is not less certainly the production of his pen; however strange may be the object of it and the ideas, it is impossible to mistake his style and manner. Still better to establish its authenticity, since the impression was finished, the editor has given up the original manuscript to public inspection; it is very fairly transcribed by the author himself.

At the head of this singular production is the following exhortation. "Whoever you are whom "heaven has made the arbiter of these pages, "whatever use you may determine to make of "them, and whatever may be the opinion you "have of the author, that unfortunate author con-"jures you by your own entrails of humanity, "and by the anguish he has suffered in writing "them, not to spurn without first reading them "through. Think that this favour, asked by a "heart broken with sorrow, is a duty of equity "imposed on you by heaven itself."

The second part of the dialogue is, of all the work, that which is most calculated to shew in their true colours the character of the book and the afflicting nature of those prejudices which

tormented the mind and imagination of the celebrated author in the latter years of his life. An inconceivably strange mixture will be observed of wonderful force of style and weakness of mind, of the disordered state of a soul of sensibility deeply wounded, combined with the absurdities of a derangement extremely serious and truly deserving of pity. It cannot be doubted that when Rousseau wrote this he was perfectly mad, nor does it appear less certain that nobody but Rousseau could have written it. What inexplicable inconsistency!—On what then does the system of our ideas depend?—How can wisdom and madness, how can talents and imbecility at once occupy so singularly the same brain?—It is then certain that one wheel of this extraordinary machine may be entirely deranged without any apparent alteration in the movements of the others. Should one not be disposed to say that this human understanding which can so little comprehend itself, is formed of a vast number of different threads, the knots of which are formed as it were by chance, and which equally by chance entangle with each other and break. And it is from so frail a composition that we presume to expect constancy, consistency, firm and immoveable principles and affections.

It seems clearly proved that no one distrusted more than the unhappy Rousseau himself the effervescences of his imagination; the care of allaying them seemed to occupy him almost entirely in the latter years of his life. We know from one

of his particular friends that it was with this view he attached himself so strongly to the study of Botany, and that he imposed upon himself, as a work of penitence, the singular task of copying over entirely with his own hand the *History of France by Mezeray.*

O curas hominum! O quantum est in rebus inane!

The Poet of Pondicherry; an Anecdote by M. Diderot.

One day I was visited by a young poet, as indeed it happens to me not unfrequently. After the usual compliments upon my talents, my genius, my taste, my benevolence, and a thousand other virtues, not a word of which ever makes the least impression upon me, although for twenty years I have been complimented for these qualities, and perhaps with sincerity,—after these preliminaries, I say, the poet drew a paper from his pocket, These are, said he, some verses.—Verses!—Yes, Sir, on which I hope you will be so good as to give me your opinion.—Do you love truth?—It is what I earnestly solicit from you.—You will most assuredly have it.—How! you really suppose that a poet can be come to seek truth from you.—Yes.—And you will really tell him the truth?—Most assuredly.—Without any disguise or reserve?—Undoubtedly. The least attempt at disguise would be a gross affront. Faithfully interpreted it would signify that I think you a bad poet, and as I do not believe that you have strength of mind enough to bear

being told so, I must think you also a poor creature as a man.—You find that this frankness generally succeeds?—I scarcely ever knew it fail.

I read the young poet's verses, and said to him, I not only think them bad, but it is clear to me that you will never make good ones.—I must then continue to make bad, as it is impossible for me to give up the matter entirely.—This is a terrible curse; only conceive, Sir, into what a state of degradation you are about to fall; neither gods nor men, nor columns, have ever pardoned even mediocrity in poets; this is what Horace himself says.—I know it.—Are you rich?—No.—Are you poor?—Very poor.—And you would add to poverty the character of a bad poet? You will lose your whole life, you must grow old, it is the course of nature; old, poor, and a bad poet, think of these things, Sir.—I do think of them but I am drawn on in spite of myself.—Have you any relations?—I have.—In what situation are they?—They are Jewellers.—Will they do any thing for you?—Perhaps so.—Well then, go to them, and see whether they will entrust you with a packet of jewels; embark with them for Pondicherry, you can make bad verses in the voyage, and when arrived there you will enter into trade and gain a fortune. This done you can return and write as many bad verses as you please, provided they are not printed, since it would not be right to ruin any body.—

It was about twelve years after I had given

my young man this advice, that he again presented himself before me. I did not recollect him. I am, Sir, said he, the person whom you sent to Pondicherry: I followed your advice, and am returned with a hundred thousand livres. I have applied myself again to making verses, and here are some; do you think them still bad?—I do, but you have acquired a fortune, and I consent now to your making bad verses.—Such is my intention.

Claude Joseph Dorat, born at Paris in 1734, died there the twenty-ninth of April 1780. However sad may have been the latter years of his life, in his early days the prospect of a happier fate seemed before him. Descended from a family long known at the bar, he inherited a pretty fortune, fully sufficient for a man of letters, who only desires ease and freedom. Becoming his own master early in life, he quitted the law, in which he originally engaged only because it was the wish of his parents, and went into the army. He has informed us himself in one of his *Epistles* that he renounced this career to satisfy an old aunt, who was a Jansenist and very devout, and who thought it impossible for him ever to work out his salvation in such a garb. This caprice, he tells us, he had often reason to repent, since it is very probable if he had continued to pursue his military career, he might in time have become a Marshal of France. However this may be, he found his consolations in love, philosophy, and the muses.

M. Dorat was of a middling stature, slim and lightly made; he had very good features, a look which indicated talent, with a good deal of originality, penetrating, yet mild. It always appeared to me that the character of his works might be judged by his physiognomy, and that of his physiognomy by his works. The distinguishing features by which his countenance was characterized, took their impression rather from his habits of life, than from his natural disposition. The fire that animated his eyes, resembled the sparks from a crackling flame, which are fugitive and devoid of heat. His smile had less gaiety than grace, and less grace than manner. Mild and easy in his deportment, he seemed more ambitious of pleasing in company than of dazzling. He made himself many enemies by his imprudence, by his indiscretion, and sometimes by his awkwardness, but he seemed very rarely to have any intention to offend. It was only in his declining days, after he was soured by some criticisms unjustly severe, and by those little literary bickerings which a poet never fails to consider as positive persecutions, that he permitted himself to repel hatred by hatred, and abuse by abuse. Though for ever running some risk or other of displeasing either his masters or his rivals, he could not support the idea of being on bad terms with them, and always sought every possible opportunity of reconciliation. After having many times insulted the Academy very gratuitously, what anxiety did he not evince,

and what pains did he not take to obtain a seat there! Whatever wrongs he received from M. Linguet, and it is said that the latter thought he might avail himself of the great intimacy between them, to rob him without apprehending any unpleasant consequences,—or however ill-treated he might be by M. de La Harpe to whom he had rendered services only to be expected from our very best friends, he was always ready to fly to both with open arms. His anger and his vengeance did not draw any greater consequences after them than all the other habits of his heart and mind.

The first essay of M. Dorat's muse was, I believe, an *Ode to Misfortune.* This was soon followed by some *Heroics*, and when he was about twenty, he produced a tragedy called *Zulica.* The same piece was re-produced last year, under the title of *Peter the Great*, and in the preface to it, he tells us that at its first appearance, the celebrated Crebillon, who was then censor of the theatre, took it so warmly under his protection, that he almost re-wrote the fifth act. "It will easily be "believed," says he, "after this, what was my "intoxication and what were my hopes. I already "saw my piece in the clouds, peals of applause "rung in my ears, I thought of nothing less than "immortality. The day arrived;—a first perform-"ance dispels all illusion, and brings back every "thing to the sober truth;—it is the magic wand "which transforms the gardens of Armida into a "desert. The charm, alas! was broke, and the

" temple of posterity was closed against me. Four " acts were received with transport, but in the " fifth, from which I expected the most, all my " hopes were wrecked, my piece received its *coup-* " *de-grâce.*" Some years after he brought out upon the same theatre *Theagenes and Chariclea*, but that fell dead at once. This fall he supported with great fortitude, and soon advertised the public very gaily that he renounced the honours of the *sublime*, and should no longer sing any thing but sports and smiles, the loves and the graces. From that time scarcely a month passed that did not give birth to some production of his muse, fugitive epistles, tales, fables, love pieces of all forms and kinds. There was not an Iris but shared his vows, whose favours he did not celebrate; not any event of importance, not any singular adventure occurred, that did not set his pen in action; kings, philosophers, comets, beauties, all by turns were made the themes of his song, all shared the light and brilliant tribute of his poetic vein. If in this multitude of productions succeeding each other so rapidly, there are few of which posterity has deigned to preserve the remembrance, they had at least the merit of amusing for some moments the idleness of our circles, of giving a transient *éclat* to our fashionable follies and frivolities, and of instructing the provinces tolerably well in the passing whimsies of the capital.

Many of these works are censured as being far too highly coloured, and written in a strain

of ridicule, which often ceases to amuse from being carried beyond all reason; with violations of tone and taste, that absolutely shock, and with a tiresome sameness of manner. But there is scarcely any one in which, notwithstanding all these faults, there may not be found the happiest images, the happiest modes of expression, combinations of words and ideas altogether new and striking, turns of thought light, airy and original, and a versification perfectly easy and sonorous. The painter is always negligent in the keeping of his pictures, but his first thoughts are generally ingenious; his sketches, though wanting in truth and correctness, have an air of elegance by which the taste of our age can easily suffer itself to be seduced. If he paints only a factitious sort of nature, it is painted after the manner of Ovid and du Boucher. He has made mere sketches, flattering himself that nothing more was necessary for finishing them but to colour them highly, and to cover them with a brilliant varnish. We dare presume however that posterity will not confound all the productions of M. Dorat in the same class, and that in the ample collection of his works a proper distinction will be made in favour of his poem upon *Declamation*, the most highly finished of them, of his charming tale of *Alphonso*, and some of his fables, epistles, and fugitive pieces; in these things it may with truth be said that no one ever approached so near to the manner and colouring of M. de Voltaire.

Happy had it been for M. Dorat if he had

confined his efforts to this kind of writing alone, but enticed anew into the theatrical career, and two pieces which he brought out, *Regulus, and the Artifice through Love*, meeting with some applause, there was no road which leads to the Temple of Fame that he did not suppose himself qualified to pursue. Repulsed on all sides by his rivals, ill-treated by the public, he imputed his want of success only to the inveteracy of a cabal, and flattered himself that he should, by multiplied labours, finish with silencing them. The better to secure this point he had the weakness to purchase the applauses of the pit and boxes, and thus completed the ruin of a fortune already much impaired, furnishing by the same means new grounds for his enemies to turn him into ridicule. In the space of a few years he produced *Adelaide of Hungary, The Bachelor, The Imaginary victim of Misfortune, The French Knight at Turin, The French Knight at London, Roscide, and Peter the Great.* He wrote besides several pieces which have been accepted but not yet performed, as *Zoranis, The Trumpeters, Alcestes, etc.*

All the pieces played were received with a certain degree of applause and were performed several times, but at each new piece the saying of the Dutch after the battle of Malplaquet was applied to him: *Another such victory and we are ruined.* Thus, paying very dear the pleasure of occupying almost exclusively the French theatre, M. Dorat passed the last years of his life in bitter-

ness and chagrin; always involved in disputes with the actors and finishing by being their debtor; engaged eternally in law-suits with the booksellers, whom he ruined from the mania he had of decorating even his most trifling works with splendid plates and vignettes; harassed by his creditors and still more by the inveteracy of some of the journalists; tormented with attacks of bile; and exhausted with labour and pleasure. Yet, in spite of so many untoward circumstances, he forced himself to sustain his usual pretensions to that light and careless philosophy, the exterior appearance of which became every day more necessary to him, though every day more painful.

Far happier were those days when, confining his pursuit of glory within limits more adapted to his genius, our Ovid thought only of celebrating the charms of love, of singing his happy leisures, his good fortune, even when it was only imaginary, his embarrassments with his *five mistresses*, reduced more modestly to three in later editions, the sweeter delight of having only one, the interesting caprices of Mademoiselle Beaumesnil, the accumulated infidelities of Mademoiselle Dubois, with a variety of other objects well worthy of his poetical homage.

Had he confined his views to carrying his talents for light pieces of poetry as near to perfection as possible, M. Dorat would have obtained a much higher rank in our literature, and consequently much more solid pretensions to immortality. It is

impossible to dispute his being endowed with talents and that kind of imagination which could give a value to this species of writing, and if he had bestowed more pains in finishing what he wrote with so much facility, he would have avoided the censures which he must be acknowledged to deserve even from the most candid criticism. At the same time it is possible that his powers could not carry him farther than to make light and pleasing sketches over which he could throw a kind of varnish of style that gave them the appearance of brilliance, and that he would have failed in the attempt to give them a real and genuine polish. The understanding may be improved by the increase of knowledge, but can we by the same means improve our talents? If exercise gives a habit which renders what we are capable of doing easier to us, can it equally extend the sphere within which we have the power of acting, can it give new energy to the mind, or enable it to soar to a height denied by nature?

Whatever it might cost M. Dorat he sustained his character with fortitude to the very last. The state of debility and languor in which he had been for some months, indicated his end to be approaching, and he appears to have met it without betraying any symptoms of weakness or fear. His last moments were occupied, like the rest of his life, in making verses, in seeking the society of his friends, in suffering himself to be deceived by his mistress, and in ridiculing his own follies with the utmost gaiety. He was al-

ready dying, and what was still more already ruined, when, to ruin himself if possible still farther, he engaged in a little secret intrigue, without being the less assiduous in his attentions to the Countess de B——, or to Mademoiselle Fannier of the French Theatre; to the latter it has been confidently said, that he was privately married. On the eve of his death he was visited by the minister of the parish, whom he received with great politeness and respect, but declined entirely the offices of his ministry. Two hours before he expired he would be dressed according to his usual custom, and his last breath was drawn sitting in his arm-chair, elegantly frizzed and powdered. If malice may be disposed to turn this circumstance into ridicule, it cannot be denied but that it shews great fortitude and tranquillity of mind, and the closing scene of our poet's life is equal to that of many philosophers, who have made a much greater parade with their systems, and whose names have been much more celebrated. So true it is that a frivolous disposition sometimes serves us much better than all the efforts of reason and virtue.

In a sitting of the French Academy on the festival of Saint Louis, M. Gaillard read a piece of criticism on the subject proposed for the prize at the Academy the ensuing year, *The Abolition of Vassalage in all the King's dominions.* In it was an idea which appears to me very ingenious; it is the manner in which he accounts for the great

attachment of the French to a monarchical form of government; while the English have always adhered no less to republican principles. "In France," says he, "it has always been the kings "that defended the people against the vexations of "the nobles; while, in England, the nobles have "defended them against the usurpations of the "throne." If this be not strictly true, one, at least, scarcely knows how to resist the pleasure of assenting to it.

The English Spy; or, Secret Correspondence between My Lord All-Eye and My Lord All-Ear, four volumes, 8vo., is a sort of anecdote-gazette which, although in general not very well digested, contains more truths than are usually to be found in books of this kind. We are at present assured that it is the work of the late Sieur Mairobert, Censor Royal, who last year opened his veins in a public bath to atone for having been implicated, in a very dishonourable manner, in the law-suit against the Marquis de Brunoy. He is said to have endeavoured to share the Marquis's spoils with many other honest men, far above the weakness of entertaining scruples of any kind; their philosophy, however, it should seem, was carried to a much more noble pitch than his; since they have not shewn themselves equally susceptible of shame and remorse. The book is both curious and interesting.

M. Linguet has been sent to the Bastille. He was conducted thither, as report says, in order to prevent the matter making any great noise, by one of his friends, the Commissary Chesnon, under pretence of taking him to dine with him, at his country-house, in the wood of Vincennes. The public is, at present, ignorant of the true cause of his detention, and the rumours on the subject are various. The impertinent things said in his *Annals* with regard to the King of Prussia, to the States General, to our treaties with America, on the conduct of the war; any, or all of these are among the causes assigned: on the latter subject he recently said, *that it was impossible to divine the motive af any one step taken, even after the event.* Another cause to which the matter is ascribed, is a letter written to Marshal Duras, on the subject of a paper in the *Annals,* respecting his suit with M. Desgrée, which paper had been suppressed, through the Marshal's interposition. In this letter the audacious *Annalist* has the madness to call a man clothed with the first dignity of the kingdom, by an epithet scarcely ever used but among the lowest and vulgarest of the people, and that in direct terms, without any of the metaphorical circumlocutions, in general so profusely scattered over his writings. The letter is moreover signed boldly with his own name, *Linguet.*

Whatever may be the real cause of the disgrace of this celebrated writer, the order of Ad-

vocates, the Academy, the Parliaments, and a great number of worthy individuals, all of whom have been, at one time or other, grossly insulted by him, will easily console themselves for their loss. He has, however, many friends and protectors, full of zeal in his behalf, and by whom he will be much regretted, among the clergy, at court, among the military of a certain description, and, above all, among the frequenters of the coffee-houses. The malignant part of the latter were gratified by his violence, the idle were amused, and by the fools his writings were admired as worthy of being classed with the sublimest models of French eloquence. What a loss to mankind, what an irreparable loss, if the flights of so lofty a genius are to be restrained for any length of time! With a little less geometry in his head than is usually learnt at college, he recently engaged to demonstrate that Newton is a mere visionary; he has already proved that Montesquieu was a mere ass in legislation. In all such enterprises, as in that of Saint Denis to walk without his head, *the difficulty lies entirely in the first step.*

A young poet, by name Gilbert, less celebrated for his talents than for the abuse of them, which has been particularly shewn in two satires, called *The Eighteenth Century* and *My Apology*, where the most distinguished characters in France, both for virtue and talents, are insulted, without

any shame or reserve; this young man has just terminated his wretched career in a very wretched manner. Born at Fontenoy-Le-Château near Nancy, of very worthy parents, but not much gifted by fortune, he was early in life attracted to the capital by his taste for letters. Not finding any other means of subsistence there, but the bread of the Archbishop and the wine of Master Freron, he set himself about paying the proper price for these, by employing all the powers he derived from genius and malignity in abusing the Philosophers. It is but justice due to him to acknowledge that poetic powers were never employed against them in a more forcible and original manner. I know not by what fatality a service of such importance was not better paid, but it is certain that the unfortunate author remained still in a state of great distress. For some months he had laboured under a terrible depression of spirits, which ended, at last, in his mind becoming completely deranged; like Jean Jaques, he persuaded himself that the philosophers were raising the whole universe against him, and wanted to take away his life. In a fit of delirium, to prevent his enemies taking him by surprise, he actually swallowed the large key of his room door. This fact might appear incredible, if it were not attested by all the surgeons of the hospital whither he was carried before he died; and, perhaps, a still more extraordinary circumstance is, that he lived between a fortnight and three weeks after he had made this singular meal.

The cause of his illness was not known, but his reason being somewhat restored by the medicines given him, he was constantly talking about this key. Whatever he said upon the subject was, however, asscribed to some remains of insanity, and the truth was not established till his body was opened after his death. The key was then found hooked by one of the wards to the membranes of the œsophagus, near the upper orifice of the stomach.

All Paris knows in what functions the Chevalier de Mouhy was employed by Marshal Belle-Isle. Of these functions it must be owned, that the Chevalier acquitted himself as a good citizen and a good Statesman. One day he came to the Marshal in great transports. "Ah, Sir," said he, "I have made the happiest discovery! She is "only sixteen, lovely as the dawn, with cheeks "like roses, and is innocence itself: but this is "not all—there is one quality that outweighs "every other." "Well, tell it directly then." "The most valuable of all qualities, Sir, she is "deaf and dumb; the secrets of the state will be "in perfect safety."

It is well known that the Count du Tressan a long time ago made a most gross song upon the Duke de Nivernois which began with the following words: *cheat, liar, and poltroon*, a specimen which will give a very fair idea of the strain in which the whole was written. When M. du Tressan, went,

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as candidate for a vacant seat in the Academy to solicit the Duke's vote, the latter answered him with the utmost coolness: *I wish you joy, Sir, of your good health, of your past successes, of your new hopes, and above all of your* MEMORY!

On the second performance of Iphigenia at the Opera, an event occurred too memorable not to find a place in the annals of the Royal Academy of Music. Mademoiselle Laguerre, who in her early youth distinguished herself *in triviis*, who some years after ruined the Prince de Bouillon in the space of four or five months, who has just exhausted the purse of M. Haudry de Souci, one of our richest farmers-general;—this Iphigenia, or Mademoiselle Laguerre, who could never forsake the delightful habits she had acquired in her first situation, was exceedingly drunk upon the stage, and reeled about to such a degree as to incommode the priestesses exceedingly while they exerted their utmost efforts to support her. It is scarcely to be conceived how she got through the first act. Fear of interrupting the performance, and still more compassion for the situation in which the unfortunate Piccini must be at such a moment, softened the hearts of the pit, so that they shewed much more forbearance than could reasonably be expected; a few slight murmurs only of disapprobation or rather of reprobation were heard; the company abstained from laughing and hissing. Every thing possible was done at the conclusion of the act, to

disperse the vapours which still confused the poor Princess's head, and at length she was so far recovered that she went through the remainder of her part with somewhat more decency and decorum. This accident has not been attended with any very important consequences. The story having been related to the king at his own desire, his majesty said to M. Amelot: *Well, you have sent her to prison?* —This had not yet been done, but the same evening she received an order to present herself at *Fort l'Evêque*, to which she submitted with the utmost resignation. She was suffered to quit her confinement again in two days, and resume her station at the Opera. At her first performance after this event, she repeated with such deep sensibility the two first lines of her character:

> O fatal day!—day that I would in vain
> Not count among the moments of my life!

that the public now in its turn appeared drunk, and evinced its intoxication by applauses without number and without end. It is true that she sung better than ever. At the end of the first act it was announced to her in a manner which doubled the value of the favour, that she was restored to liberty. M. Piccini, and the Prince de Guémené, who interest themselves much for the honour of Italian music, had interceded in her favour:—What can one not pardon to a fine voice!---I knew an Italian lady, however, that was less indulgent. A celebrated virtuoso was praised in her presence: *Yes*, she said, *a fine voice, but a bad heart! My brother, the car-*

dinal, made a soprano of him, and he never evinced the least gratitude.

The greater part of the *Pieces interesting and little known*, which M. de Laplace has just published at Brussels, were found among the papers of M. Duclos; the editor has happily not added any thing of his own. It is well known that, at the death of the academician historiographer, the Duke de la Vrillière got possession of his papers; but no one can tell into whose hands they afterwards passed, or by what chance M. de Laplace obtained the right of disposing of them. The collection is not on that account the less curious; and although all the anecdotes are not equally well authenticated, or equally important, and many are already well known, they are still sufficiently interesting.

The correspondence between Jean Baptiste Rousseau and the Count de Bonneval, respecting the bickerings which forced the latter at length to take refuge in Turkey, though not containing any very important matter, serves to display the character of this illustrious adventurer much better than any of the memoirs of him with which we have been hitherto presented. The most original of these letters is the answer which the Count de Bonneval, already a pacha, made to his brother the Marquis who had written to him from Paris by the Chevalier de Beaufremont. It contains a very lively picture of his manner of living at Constantinople, with the most simple and natural exposition pos-

sible of the motives which led to his strange conduct.

The extract from the memorial of M. Duclos contains more witty sayings than interesting facts, but it is at least of as much value as the greater part of the *ana* that graced the last century. There are many anecdotes of the latter end of Louis the Fourteenth's reign, of the Regency, of the Duke de Noailles, of Cardinal Dubois, and others, which are well worth preserving. Among them is a detailed confirmation of the suspicions which have always been entertained respecting the death of Queen Henrietta of England. The author assures us that Morel, *Comptroller of the mouth* to her Majesty, confessed all to Louis the Fourteenth. He said that she was poisoned, that the Chevalier de Lorraine sent the poison from Rome to the Marquis d'Effiat, and that it was mixed in a glass of chicory water which her Majesty drank. Soon after she began to feel horrible pains in her body; these were succeeded in a few hours by convulsions, in which she died. *Did my brother know it?* said the King. *Sire,* replied Morel, *we know him too well to have confided our secret to him.* The King then seeming to breathe again said: *"I am comforted!—retire.*

M. Duclos does not bring forward his authorities for what he states, he does not mention any one whatever; but the details agree perfectly with the circumstances which M. de Voltaire thought he ought not to conceal, however scrupulous and circumspect he may be in general with respect to pub-

lishing anecdotes of such a kind. He plainly says that the Queen thought herself poisoned, and that the English ambassador, Montaigu, was persuaded of it; that the Court had no doubt of this being the case, and that it was the report all over Europe; an old servant in the house of *Monsieur*, he says, even named to him the person who administered the poison.

I have been told by an officer who was on board the squadron of M. de Guichen, when that admiral joined Don Solano in the West Indies, that the Spanish commander had been denounced by his almoner to the familiars of the Inquisition who were on board the squadron, as having been convicted of an enormous impiety,—no less than reading the Abbé Raynal's *Philosophical History*. In order to obtain absolution for so heinous a crime, he was obliged to ask pardon on his knees of God and the Holy Inquisition, having first seen the book solemnly burnt in his presence. It is well known that one of the heaviest accusations brought by the Inquisition against the unfortunate Olivadès was, that he had translated this terrible work into Spanish. The translation was never printed, but the crime was not in the smallest degree diminished, in their eyes, by the thing that gave offence having remained secret. Great Heaven! and we are separated only by the Pyrenees from such barbarous supporters of so mild a religion.

April 1781.

The Italian Theatre has just experienced a great loss, in the death of M. Thomas d'Hèle, the author of many little pieces; one whose genius seems to have been more in unison with Gretry's than that of any other modern writer: no one, perhaps, has furnished this charming composer with subjects and situations more analogous to the character of his music, to the refinement of his talents.

M. d'Hèle, as we are informed, was a native of the county of Gloucester in England, and entered very young into the English service. During the last war he was sent to Jamaica; he afterwards travelled over the greatest part of Europe, and made a long stay in Switzerland and in Italy. There is reason to think that he was not born without fortune; all his manners, at least, indicated an education very much above that of common life: he had lived, however, ten years at Paris, and till within the last few months never appeared in easy circumstances. The loss of his patrimony, in whatever way it was dissipated, had reduced him to pass his life in the coffee-houses at Paris, or at Fort l'Evêque. Yet how deplorable soever his situation appeared, it never altered his natural loftiness of soul, nor the manners which that distinguishing feature in his character had given him; if ever so ill clothed, still his carriage, his demeanour, shewed the man of high birth. He was totally free from pride and affectation, and the manner in

which he avoided speaking of himself was as full of moderation and discretion towards others, as of respect, if I may be allowed to say so, for himself. Since the success of his pieces at the Comic Opera, he had become exceedingly attached to Madame Bianchi, who played the characters of waiting-women in the Italian pieces. He was entirely absorbed in this passion, and renounced for her sake all other society, and all his friends. Not having been able to detain her here when the Italian troop was dispersed, the chagrin of being separated from her is thought to have contributed very much towards shortening his days. It was about the end of the last year, some months after her departure, that he died of a pulmonary complaint. He was scarcely forty years of age.

The Abbé Coyer has just published *an Essay on Preaching, a complete Series for Lent in a single Sermon.* Some parts of it are really oratorical, but in general it is a piece of empty declamation, full of vague and common-place ideas. A Lent sermon preached before his Majesty by the Abbé ...., would probably be a more curious piece to read than the *complete series* of the Abbé Coyer. At Versailles he was very much reproached with having introduced into his sermon too many things irrelevant to his subject, too many political discussions, too much about finance, and the administration; with having acted the king rather than preached before the King. "*Tis a pity,*" said his

Majesty, as he went out of church, "*that the Abbé .... did not give us a little touch of religion, he would then have talked of every thing.*"

If the author of *False Infidelities*, M. Barthe, no longer troubles himself with writing comedies, he at least performs one himself every now and then, for the entertainment of his friends. However disagreeable may have been the last in which he exhibited himself, the scene was accompanied with circumstances so odd and humourous, and has become so public, that it must not be passed over in silence. Our poet was playing at trictrac, in I know not what coffee-house, with an officer who was not known to him, but whose notable feats had already procured him a lodging for some time in the Castle of Vincennes. The parties grew warm with play, they began to be very impatient, some harsh expressions were uttered on both sides; but there the matter seemed to stop. When the party had broke up, M. Barthe had the imprudence to repeat, loud enough to be heard, "*He's a great blackguard, but I told him my mind pretty plainly!*" As proud of this little triumph as M. de Pourceaugnac, he was going away, but to his great surprize found his antagonist at the door, with his sword in his hand. The poet was desirous of drawing his in return, but near-sighted as he is, and agitated by the circumstance, a man may very well not be able to find his sword immediately. At length it was found, but here another misfortune came in the way, it held so fast in the scabbard that it was

impossible to draw it out. His adversary had the meanness to take advantage of this circumstance, and had it not been for the assistance of some passers by, who pressed forward to terminate so unequal a combat, the shoulders of our poor poet would have been battered to pieces.

Escaped from this vehement attack, he went to dine out, not having yet confided his secret to any one: but his mind still dwelling upon sad recollections, he was so absent, that in quitting the house, instead of taking his own hat he took that of his neighbour, a fine dressed hat with a feather, and thus decorated went and took his seat in the amphitheatre at the Opera. He was soon perceived, and the disastrous story of the morning having got wind, a general buzz of speculation ran from one to another, whether he had taken the cane upon his shoulders as intended to dub him a knight-errant. Information of the affair was however laid before the tribunal of the marshals of France; the poet acknowledged having received the blows, and the officer having given them. At first the judges were much disposed to dismiss the cause unheard, saying as the Duke Regent said once in a similar case: "*Well, gentlemen, you are both agreed about the matter;*"—but after having received a more detailed account of the officer's conduct, he was sentenced to be imprisoned five years and a day, and M. Barthe was advised never to play in a public coffee-house with a man wholly unknown to him. Thus ended this sad and memorable adventure.

June, 1781.

On the twenty-first of May last, the Court of Parliament issued their long expected decree, condemning the *Philosophical History* of the Abbé Raynal. This decree was given upon the requisition of the King's Advocate-General; but it is well known that M. Seguier only charged himself with so unthankful an office at the request of the Attorney-General, who had received orders to this effect from the higher powers. The purport of the decree is, "That the said William Thomas "Raynal, named in the frontispiece of the said "book, shall be apprehended and carried to the "prison of the Conciergerie, to be interrogated "respecting the facts of the said book: and the "said William Thomas Raynal's goods are to be "seized and noted, &c."

Such is the price paid by our philosopher for having obviated all possibility of being reproached by posterity with not having put his name to the boldest things that himself and his friends could say or think respecting the different powers of heaven and earth; upon priests, upon ministers, upon all those, in short, who have the most right to take umbrage at such things. Will the gratitude of posterity indemnify him for what he has thus gratuitously sacrificed? The opinion of the present age does not give any earnest that can lead to a reasonable hope of such an indemnification. They say that in retrenching from his book what has given offence, it would not have been in any respect less useful, nor

would it have been less read; they observe that in abstaining from putting his name and his portrait at the head of the book, as they had been dispensed with in the former editions, it would not have been the less his, or the less known to be his, and that without this unnecessary piece of imprudence the judges would not have been under the necessity of proceeding to extremities against him; extremities which it will be difficult indeed in any degree to soften. But what cannot a violent love of celebrity carry us through? what can it not make us forget? what can it not enable us to suffer?

The Abbé Raynal, intoxicated with a success which had far exceeded his expectations, could not be satisfied without making still more noise; and what more could be done except endeavouring to merit a juridical summons,—some severe censure from the Sorbonne,—nay, that the work should be consigned to the flames by the hands of the executioner. The first edition, bold as it was, had obtained none of these honours; it became then necessary to do something still more daring at the publication of the second. His cooperators might represent to him that he was going too far; they might say who will dare to print, who will dare to own that?—"*I will,* he replied, "*I, therefore go on. I see plainly you have no idea how far my courage can lead me.*" The only check to which he would submit was, that in handling the priests and the Christian religion somewhat roughly, great forbearance should be shown to theism, since the

opposite principles scattered through the first edition had revolted many persons of respectability in England and Germany.

Thus our poor Abbé, from the passion for exciting a great sensation, has suffered himself to be carried beyond all bounds; and too much occupied with the deep interest created by this feeling, could no longer calculate any thing coolly; or, perhaps we should rather say, he has found himself mistaken in all his calculations. He thought that, wrapped up in his reputation and the respect his age must inspire, no attempt would be made to attack him directly, that the higher powers would even be deterred by the rigour with which he must necessarily be pursued, if pursued at all; he flattered himself with finding his security in the very excess of his boldness. The utmost he expected, even if the government should not think proper to treat the whole matter with contempt, was to pass some months in the Bastille; and who among our modern sages would not rejoice to be regarded, at so easy a cost, as the martyr to philosophy, as the injured defender of liberty and of the people.

It is evident that M. Seguier did not undertake the denunciation required of him without considerable regret. It is asserted that his first care was to advertise M. Raynal himself of what was going forward, that he might have time to provide for his safety. He did not hesitate even to lament in his requisition the reproaches which this indispensable function of his office would bring upon him from

the philosophical party. "These apostles of tole-
"ration," he said, "will, without compunction,
"charge with envy and jealousy, those who are
"obliged to rise against the authority they arrogate
"to themselves; they will even go the length of
"giving the appellation of persecutors to all who,
"by their situations, are obliged to oppose their
"errors."

A seizure both of person and property, the necessity of quitting a country where he lived a happy and easy life, a life flattering to his talents, —these things it must be owned are hard enough even to a philosopher. A much harder thing is that all these pains are incurred by the most gratuitous acts of imprudence, without being recompensed by that verdict of public opinion which is superior to all the tribunals in the world, which alone can console the mind under all disgraces, under all the injustice experienced either from our fellow creatures or from fortune. Although the last edition of the *Philosophical History* is in general far superior to the others, it has scarcely added any thing to the personal glory of the Abbé Raynal. Nay, farther, the glory which he had expected from it was never more warmly disputed. It is certain that since he has put at the head of his book his name and that silly portrait which gives him so savage a countenance, and resembles him so little, —it is certain, I say, that since this time people have been more busy than before in finding out that he had co-operators in the work, to whom some

of those parts in which he prides himself the most are ascribed. There is one passage in which it is impossible not to recognise at every moment, even in those effusions of sensibility where the Abbé wishes to appear led away entirely by a sentiment peculiar to himself, a style and ideas well known to us;—I mean his regrets on the loss of his friend Eliza Draper. No one connected with the society in which Madame Necker moves, can fail of being struck with the great resemblance that the affecting epitaph on this Eliza Draper * bears to one written by Diderot some years ago, in the presence of twelve or fifteen persons, for Madame Necker. How great soever may be the esteem entertained for M. Raynal, it is impossible not to find such imitations ridiculous, even though the terms on which he borrows should be perfectly equitable.

July 1781.

The famous Esculapius, the Count de Cagliostro, at the solicitation of the Cardinal de Rohan, has consented for a short time to quit Strasbourg, hitherto the most brilliant theatre of his glory, to come and see the Prince de Soubise, who is dangerously ill. He only saw him, however, in his convalescence. The mild genius, who watches over the destinies of the opera, had no occasion to resort

* "You who visit the place where rest these sacred ashes, "write upon the marble which covers them: such a year, such "a month, such a day, such an hour, God withdrew his breath "from her, and Eliza died!"

to the miracles wrought by Count Cagliostro, for the restoration of his highness's health.

All we have been able to learn respecting this extraordinary man during his stay at Paris, which was short, and where he was nearly *incog.* is, that some persons among the Cardinal de Rohan's acquaintance, who took the opportunity of consulting him, were much benefited by his prescriptions, but they could never make him accept the smallest token of their gratitude. One person thought of giving him five and twenty louis, requesting that he would distribute them among the poor of Strasbourg. He did not refuse the gift, but the day before his departure visiting the donor, and making his acknowledgments for the confidence that had been placed in him, he begged him to take the charge of fifty louis and distribute them among the poor of his parish, with whom he had not himself had time to become acquainted. This is an undoubted fact.

M. de Cagliostro was long suspected to have been valet-de-chambre to the famous M. de Saint Germain, who made so much noise under the reign of Madame de Pompadour; at present he is rather believed to be the son of a Director of the Mines at Lima; it is very certain that he appears to have the Spanish accent, and to be very rich. One day, at the house of the Countess de Brienne, he was much pressed to explain the origin of an existence so surprising and so mysterious, when he answered smiling; "All I can say is that I was born in the

" midst of the Red Sea, and educated under the " ruins of one of the pyramids of Egypt. It was " there that, abandoned by my parents, I found " a good old man who took care of me; to him " I am indebted for every thing that I know."— *Credat alter.*

Is it the more difficult task, at present, to write a good tragedy, or a good comedy? This is a question we find agitated perpetually, and whichever side we take, thus much is certain, that it is far easier to support either than to imagine a single new scene, whether comic or tragic. It is a fact, that we can cite three or four poets who may be placed nearly on a line with Sophocles and Euripides, while Moliere has left at a great distance all who entered upon the comic career before him, and all who have attempted to follow him. The field of tragedy appeared already very much exhausted in the time of Aristotle; the number of subjects really tragic which we see treated before him is extremely limited, and the many requisites to render a subject suitable to our theatre is not calculated to extend those limits. What new harvest is to be expected after the riches gathered by Corneille, by Racine, and by Voltaire? Would not the field of comedy be more vast and more new?—One man alone seems hitherto to have possessed the art of giving it its full value. Is this art, then, the most difficult of all?—has he alone carried it to such perfection, as to drive all others to despair, who would wish to follow him?

Without attempting to examine these different questions, let us confine ourselves to proposing one which may very well dispense with any answer being given to the others. If tragedy has furnished, in the present times, a greater number of interesting subjects for the stage than comedy, is it not solely because the first has ventured forwards much more boldly, and the latter much less so than in former times? In transporting so happily some of the most striking beauties of the English stage upon the French, has not M. de Voltaire given greater strength and compass to the action of his tragedies? What situations has he not brought forward into action, which Corneille and Racine would never have dared to produce but in recital? Has not his manner of painting characters, manners, opinions, in general, much more boldness, does he not give them much more movement? If none of those who have struck into this path since him, have been able to attain the same height to which his genius soared, they have all at least followed at a respectful distance the route he chalked out. Without succeeding in the composition of good works, they have often brought forward such as have produced altogether a good effect; rough sketches, perhaps, in fact, but such as the magic of the scene could carry off well. Comedy, on the contrary, has become every day more and more timid;—under the idea of becoming more pure, more decent, it is become cold and insipid. No longer daring to give characters strongly drawn,

passions wrought up with warmth, comic traits too well known or too gross, she now confines herself within the narrow circle of maintaining the genuine spirit of society. She tries to supply the place of the true *vis comica* by romantic incidents, to substitute the original sallies of gay and lively satire for portraits, maxims, and declamation. In order not to wound by pictures which would be found too true, she is forced to soften all the features of her models; she can no longer seize any thing but a mellowed shading, a sort of half character; all her forms are become factitious, her colours false and devoid of effect. It is very true that Moliere seems to have engrossed all the richest and happiest subjects, but if he could rise again, how many more would he find that in his hands would become equally comic? Subjects for ridicule are things which will never be wanting to a poet. Though these subjects may sometimes have the art to conceal themselves more dexterously than at others, do they the less exist to his eyes?—Would not even the art with which they endeavour to conceal themselves furnish of itself new means, in the hands of true genius, for rendering them more comic and more odious? Once more I say, it is not subjects that are wanting to the poets, it is the talent, as we had better confess at once, the liberty of treating them with effect! The taste of the public has not become better, but it is more squeamish. The self-love of mankind is always the same, but that of our age appears more susceptible, and the policy

of our ediles, so easy, so indulgent in many respects, has for a long time aimed all its arrows at this point alone; it has been more severe upon the drama, taken more exceptions against it, than were ever taken under the most absolute and the least philosophic of our kings.

New Travels in Spain, in the Years 1777 *and* 1778, *treating of the Manners and Character of the People, of the Monuments, both ancient and modern, &c. &c.* Two volumes 8vo.

We have so few good works upon Spain, that this could not fail of being well received, although it is not in general well written, and still leaves many things to be desired. It is ascribed to a Spanish physician, M. Peyron; and we are assured that the Abbé Morellet undertook the revision of it with regard to the style. Such as it is, the work appears infinitely more instructive than that of Baretti, which is filled with minutiæ; far superior to M. Silhouette's which is extremely superficial; less diffuse and heavy than the works of M. Colmenar; more exact than the works of Labbat, and of the Monk Lombard. It also embraces more objects than the account of Spain by the Abbé Ponz; though his work is of great importance, as far as the arts are concerned, that being a subject on which he had occupied himself very particularly.

One of the most curious subjects treated by the author of these *New Travels,* is the circumstantial and authentic account of the *auto-da-fé*

celebrated during the reign of Charles the Second, in 1680. Another thing scarcely less remarkable, is an extract from the consultation presented to the same Charles, by Don Joseph Ledesma, upon the numberless abuses existing in the tribunal of the Inquisition; we are not perhaps in possession of any work, which displays more forcibly the true spirit of that horrible jurisdiction. The particulars respecting the last victim of so monstrous a superstition, M. d'Olivadès, may be read with more composure, since we know that this illustrious object of its persecution leads at present a quiet and easy life in Paris; that he enjoys a considerable part of his fortune, pardoning, like a good christian, the Capucins and the Inquisitors, endeavouring to forget the persecutions of the one, and the catechism of the other, among our theatres, our philosophers, our Aspasias, and now and then a Laïs. It requires no small share of every thing that can amuse and disengage the mind, to efface in any degree the recollection of sufferings such as he endured.

May, 1782.

Portrait of the Abbé Delille, by Madame Molé.

In wit a man, simplicity a child.—POPE, *Epitaph on Gay.*

I am going to sketch the portrait of a great man, and a man whom I love. The enterprize may appear rash, and my impartiality may be suspected; but the characters of genius are sufficiently prominent in him to supply the place of talent, and to secure the painter against the illusions of friendship.

I know nothing that can be compared with the graces of his mind, with his ardour, with his gaiety, with his sallies, or with his eccentricities. His works have neither the character or the physiognomy of his conversation. In reading his writings we should suppose it impossible for any one to be more serious; in seeing him he might be supposed never to have a serious thought; in the one he is the master, in the other the scholar. He never concerns himself about the things with which society is principally occupied; petty events have no ascendancy over him, he takes no heed of any thing, of any body, scarcely even of himself; often without having seen or known any thing of the matter he says things extremely *à-propos*; often does he come out with things remarkable for their simplicity, but he is always agreeable. His ideas flow with amazing rapidity, and he communicates them all; there is no jargon in his conversation, neither is there any thing studied; it is a happy mixture of beauties and negligences, a pleasing confusion, which always charms, and sometimes astonishes.

As to his face?—A little girl once said that it was all in zigzag. The women never observe what it is, but what it expresses; it is in fact ugly, but wonderfully intelligent, I will say interesting. He has a large mouth, but it utters very fine verses; his eyes are grey, and somewhat sunk in his head, but he does whatever he pleases with them, and the flexibility of his features gives such an air of

sentiment to his physiognomy, a something so noble, so full of the *poetic phrenzy*, that it does not allow him time to appear ugly. He is much occupied with his own face, but in the same manner as he is with every thing odd, as a subject to raise a laugh, and his attention to his person is always in contrast with the occasion; I have known him appear in the Duchess's drawing-room in a frock, and ride about the woods on horseback in a short cloak.

His heart is not above fifteen years old, and is therefore easy to be known. It is kind, it is inspired with twenty emotions at once, yet is not restless; it never loses itself by wandering into futurity, still less does it concern itself much with the past. Full of sensibility, even to excess, and equally alive to feeling at every moment, he may be attacked in a thousand ways, but he never can be conquered; his gaiety always comes to his assistance, rendering him the happiest of human beings; shall it be added that this gaiety is sometimes playful even to thoughtlessness? He forgets that he is loved to such a degree, as to give reason for apprehending him wholly indifferent about the matter; it seems as if he would be embarrassed with the unexpected question whether he loves or is loved?

His conduct is like his conversation, extremely thoughtless. The pleasures of the town are nothing to him, he does not concern himself about them. He resigns himself voluntarily to one sole object; he is never troubled with ennui; he has no occasion for a great world, nor a great sphere of

action, and seems to forget what posterity promises him; he may be said most truly to *suffer himself to be happy.* Do not be surprized at the hours he devotes to you, undoubtedly he is happy in your society; but he is happy every where, even with his housekeeper. He plays at *La Peur* when he is not forming an Andromache or a Zaïre. Your conversation is pleasant to him indeed, but he can also pass two hours very well in caressing his horse, though at the same time he can upon occasion forget him too. He wanders in the woods, and meditates by moonlight, completely lost in his reveries.

But if he cannot be commended for the uniformity of his life, none of the defects of irregular habits can be imputed to him. If his conduct be not very consistent, it is at least pure; and if he have no grand features of character, the want of them is supplied by manners that interest, by a simplicity, a grace of mind, a gaiety so true, so youthful, and yet so ingenious, that he is always, like a pretty woman, surrounded by admirers. In short, there is an inexpressible charm about him, which inspires those emotions of curiosity and inclination seldom inspired but by an engaging child; —that sort of unalterable attachment which seems to be reserved, generally speaking, for minds of an inferior cast; he is the poet of Plato, a being sacred, light, and airy.

*New additions to the Letter upon the Blind, by M. Diderot.**

I am going to throw together upon paper some phenomena which were not known to me when my *Letter upon the Blind* was written, and which will serve as proofs, or refutations, of many things asserted in that letter. Thirty-three or thirty four years have elapsed since the letter was written, I have read it again, endeavouring to divest myself of all partiality, and am not dissatisfied with it. Although the first part appeared to me more interesting than the second, and I feel that the one might be somewhat extended and the other much abridged, I shall leave both as they are, for fear lest the pages of the young man should be injured by the touch of the old one. I should endeavour in vain, at present, to discriminate what there is supportable in the ideas and the expressions, and I fear that I should be equally incapable of correcting any thing reprehensible. A celebrated painter of our days employs himself in his old age in spoiling the *chefs-d' œuvres* which he produced in the vigour of his earlier years. I know not whether the defects he discovers be real, but as to the talent which should correct them, either he never possessed it, or, if he did, it is lost, since every thing that belongs to man perishes with man. There is a time when taste gives counsels, the justice of which must be acknowledged, but which, perhaps,

* The letter alluded to is not printed in the collection of Diderot's works, in fifteen volumes.

we have no longer the power to follow. It is the pusillanimity which arises from the consciousness of weakness, or indolence, which is one of the consequences of weakness and pusillanimity, that disgusts me with a labour more likely, perhaps, to injure, than to contribute towards the improvement of my work.

Solve senescentem maturè sanus equum, ne
Peccet ad extremum ridendus et ilia ducat.

PHÆNOMENA.

1st. A watchmaker, who is perfectly well versed in the theory of his art, and who yields to no one in the practice of it, has often assured me that it is by the touch, and not by the sight, that he judges of the roundness of his *watch pinions.* He rolls them gently between his thumb and forefinger, and by pressure discovers trifling inequalities which escape his eye.

2d. I have heard of a blind person, who, I was assured, could tell the colour of stuffs by the touch.

3d. I know of one who shades nosegays, with as much delicacy as Jean Jaques, prided himself on possessing, when he confided to his friends, either seriously or as a joke, a plan he had for opening a school to give lessons in this art to the flower-girls at Paris.

4th. In the town of Amiens there is a blind stone-cutter, who superintends a large number of workmen, with as much intelligence as if he enjoyed his sight.

5th. A man who could see, had so little certainty in the use of his hands if using his eyes, that when he wanted to shave his head he put away the looking glass, and placed himself before a naked wall. A blind person, who does not see the danger, becomes always more intrepid, and I have no doubt that he would go with a much firmer step than a man who could see, over a narrow and elastic plank thrown as a bridge across a precipice. There are few people whose sight does not become confused at looking down from a great height.

6th. Who does not know the celebrated Daviel, or at least has not often heard him mentioned? —I have frequently been present at his operations. He couched a smith, who had contracted cataracts in his eyes, from the continual heat of his furnace. This smith having been blind for five and twenty years, had so entirely accustomed himself to doing every thing by the touch, that it was impossible without blows to make him avail himself of the sense now restored to him. Daviel said, striking him, "*Will you not look, scoundrel?*" He walked, he worked, every thing we do with our eyes open, he did with his shut. From this it may be concluded, that the eye is not so necessary for satisfying our wants, so essential to our happiness, as we are tempted to believe. If the sight of nature had no longer any charms for Daviel's blind man, we may fairly ask, what is there in the world to the loss of which a long privation may not render us wholly

indifferent, provided it be not accompanied with pain?—It may be said, perhaps, that we could never grow indifferent to the sight of a wife who is dear to us.—I cannot concur in that sentiment, though it may seem to be supported by a circumstance I am going to relate. It may be supposed, that deprived for a long time of sight, when restored to us we should never cease looking about; this is not so. The difference is very great between momentary and habitual blindness.

7th. Daviel's philanthropy brought him from all parts of the kingdom the indigent blind, who came to implore his assistance; and his reputation drew to his house numbers who were curious to witness his extraordinary talents. M. Marmontel and myself made a party there together; the blind man was seated, his cataract was removed, Daviel placed his hand upon his eyes which he had just restored to the light. An aged woman who stood by his side evinced the deepest interest in the operation, she trembled in all her limbs at every movement of the operator. The latter made a sign to her to come forward and place herself on her knees before the operatee; he removed his hands, the sick man opened his eyes and exclaimed: "*Ah! it is my mother!*"—Never was a more pathetic exclamation uttered, I could fancy that I hear it even now. The old woman fainted, tears streamed from the eyes of all present, and alms in abundance flowed from their purses.

8th. Of all those who have been deprived of

sight almost from their birth, the most surprising that ever existed, or will exist, was Mademoiselle Melanie de Salignac. She was a relation of M. de Lafargue, Lieutenant-General in his Majesty's service, an old man, who is just dead at the age of ninety-one, covered with scars and loaded with honours, and daughter to Madame de Blacy, who is still alive; the latter never ceases to regret the loss of a child who constituted the charm of her life, and was the object of admiration to all who knew her. Madame de Blacy is a woman distinguished for the eminence of her moral qualities, and who will readily answer any questions relative to the truth of my narration. It is under her auspices that I have collected such particulars of the life of Mademoiselle de Salignac as escaped my own observation during an intimacy in the family which began in 1760, and continued without interruption to 1763, the year that closed the life of the lady in question.

She had an unusual fund of good sense, the utmost mildness and sweetness of disposition, an uncommon penetration in her ideas, and great simplicity of character. One of her aunts invited her mother to come and assist her in entertaining nineteen Ostrogoths whom she had invited to dinner. "*I cannot conceive what my aunt means,*" said the niece, "*why go and entertain nineteen Ostrogoths? —for my part I only wish to entertain those I love!*" The sound of the voice produced the same effect on her as the physiognomy has upon persons that see. One of her relations, a receiver-general of

the finances, behaved very ill to her family in a way extremely unexpected, on which she remarked, "*who could have conceived this with so sweet a voice!*" When she heard any one sing, she distinguished between the voice of a fair and of a dark person. When any one spoke to her she judged of their height by the direction in which the sound came.

She had no wish to see, and one day when I asked her the reason of this, she answered me: "I should then have nothing but my own eyes, "and now I enjoy the eyes of every body. By "this privation I am an object of constant interest "and commiseration; I am obliged in some way "at every moment, and at every moment I am "grateful. Alas! if I were to see, people would "soon think of me no more."—The errors of sight very much diminished its value in her ideas. "I "am," she said, "at the entrance of a long avenue; "at the extremity of it is some object; to one of "you it appears in motion, to another it appears "still; one says that it is an animal, another "that it is a man, and on approaching, it appears "to be the stump of a tree. No one knows whether the tower they perceive afar off be round or "square. I brave the clouds of dust, while those "around me shut their eyes, and are miserable, "sometimes they even suffer a whole day for not "having shut them soon enough. An almost imperceptible atom is sufficient to torment them "cruelly."—At the approach of night she used to

say, " *that our reign was at an end, and her's was just beginning.*" It will easily be conceived that living in constant darkness with the habit of acting and thinking in an eternal night, lying awake, which is so tormenting to us, was scarcely felt by her.

She could not pardon me for having said that blind people being deprived of witnessing the exterior signs of suffering must almost necessarily be cruel.—" Do you think," said she, " that you hear " the accents of complaint as I do?"—" But," said I, " there are many who suffer without allowing " themselves to complain."—" I should soon find " them out," she said, " and only pity them the " more."

She was passionately fond of hearing any body read, and still more of music. " I think," she said, " that I could never be tired of listening to " people who sing or play in a superior manner. " If this happiness be the only one we are to enjoy " in heaven, it will be sufficient for me. You " think justly when you say that it is the most " powerful of all the fine arts, without excepting " either poetry or eloquence; that even Racine " does not express himself with the delicacy of a " harp, that his melody is heavy and monotonous " compared with that of the instrument, and that " you have often desired to give your style the " force and lightness of the tones of Bach. For " my part it is the finest language I know. In " languages spoken, those are reckoned to pro-

" nounce the best who articulate the syllables the
" most distinctly; instead of which in the lan-
" guage of music the sounds that are the most re-
" mote from each other, from the grave to the
" acute, from the acute to the grave, are blended
" together and follow imperceptibly; 'tis, if I may
" say so, one long syllable, the inflexions and ex-
" pression of which vary at every moment. While
" melody carries this sound to my ear, harmony
" executes it without confusion upon a variety of
" different instruments, two, three, four, or five,
" all concurring to strengthen the expression of the
" first, and the parties singing are so many inter-
" preters which I could readily dispense with,
" when the symphonist is a man of genius and
" knows how to give character to his performance.
" It is in the silence of night, more especially, that
" I find music expressive and delicious.

" I persuade myself," she continued, " that
" those who see, distracted by their sight, can nei-
" ther hear or understand as clearly as I do. Why
" does the eulogium of music which I hear from
" others always appear to me poor and feeble?—
" Why could I never express myself as I feel?—
" Why, in the midst of what I would say, am I
" obliged to stop, seeking in vain for words which
" can paint the sensations I experience?—Is it that
" no adequate words are yet invented?—I cannot
" compare the effect that music has upon me but to
" the sort of intoxication I experience when after
" a long absence I throw myself into the arms of

" my mother, when my voice fails me, all my " limbs tremble, tears stream down my cheeks, my " knees will no longer support me, I seem dying " with pleasure."

She had the most delicate sense of modesty that I ever witnessed. Asking her the reason of it, " It is," said she, " the effect of my mother's " good counsels. She has said so many things to " me on this subject, that I will own I could " scarcely comprehend them for a long time, and " perhaps in comprehending them I have ceased to " be innocent." She died of an inward tumour which her modesty prevented her ever mentioning.

In her dress, in her linen, in her person, there reigned a neatness which was so much the more extraordinary, as not seeing herself she could never be sure that she had done all that was requisite to avoid disgusting people with the opposite quality. If they were pouring out drink for her, she knew by the noise of the liquor in falling when the glass was full enough; she took her food with a surprising circumspection and address. Sometimes, as a joke, she would place herself before a glass to dress, imitating all the manners of a coquette who is arming for conquest. This mimicry was most exact and most truly laughable.

From her earliest youth it had been the study of all about her to improve her other senses to the utmost possible degree, and it is wonderful how much they had succeeded. By feeling she could distinguish peculiarities about the person of any

one, which might easily be overlooked by those who had the best eyes. Her hearing and smell were exquisite; she judged by the impression of the air the state of the atmosphere, whether it was cloudy or serene, whether she was in an open place or a street, and if a street whether it was a *cul-de-sac;* also whether she was in the open air or in a room, and if in a room whether it was large or small. She could calculate the size of a circumscribed space by the sound which her feet produced, or by that of her voice. When she had once gone over a house, the topography of it remained perfect in her head to such a degree that she could warn others of any little danger they were likely to incur. "*Take care, the door is too low—Do not forget that there is a step.*" She observed a variety in voices of which we have no idea, and when once she had heard a person speak, she always knew the voice again.

She was little sensible to the charms of youth, or shocked at the wrinkles of old age. She said that she regarded nothing but the qualities of the heart and mind. One advantage which she always enumerated in being deprived of sight, particularly for a woman, was, that she was in no danger of having her head turned by a handsome man. She was exceedingly disposed to confide in others; it would have been no less easy than base to deceive her. It was an inexcusable cruelty to make her believe that she was alone in a room. She was not subject to any kind of panic terrors; seldom did

she feel ennui, solitude had taught her to be every thing to herself. She had observed that in travelling, at the close of day, the company began to grow silent. "*For my part*," she said, "*I have no occasion to see those with whom I converse.*" Of all the qualities of the heart and mind, a sound judgment, mildness, and cheerfulness, were those which she prized the most.

She spoke little, and listened much: "*I am like the birds*," she said, "*I learn to sing in darkness.*" In comparing things which she heard one day with those she heard another, she was shocked at the contradiction of our judgments; it seemed to her a matter of indifference whether she was praised or blamed by beings so inconsistent. She had been taught to read by means of letters cut out; she had an agreeable voice, and sung with taste; she could willingly have passed her life at the concert or the opera, nothing but noisy music was disagreeable to her. She danced delightfully, and had learned to play on the violin; from this latter talent she derived a great source of amusement to herself, in drawing about her the young people of her own age to teach them the dances that were most in fashion.

She was exceedingly beloved by all her brothers and sisters; "This," she said, "is another "advantage which I derive from my infirmities. "People attach themselves to me by the cares they "render me, and by the efforts I make to deserve "them and to be grateful for them. Added to this,

" my brothers and sisters are not jealous of me. " If I had eyes it would be at the expense of my " heart and mind. I have so many reasons to be " good! what would become of me if I were to " lose the interest I inspire."

In the reverse of fortune experienced by her parents, the loss of masters was the only one she regretted; but the masters of geometry and music had contracted so great an attachment and esteem for her that they earnestly intreated permission to give her lessons gratuitously. " *What shall I do, Mama?*" she said, " *they are not rich and have occasion for all their time.*"

She had been taught music by characters in relief, which were placed in raised lines upon the surface of a large table. These characters she read with her hand, then executed them upon her instrument, and after a very little study could play a part in a piece however long or complicated. She understood the elements of astronomy, algebra, and geometry. Her mother sometimes read to her the Abbé de la Caille's book, and asking her whether she understood it, " *Oh perfectly!*" she replied. Geometry, she said, was the true science for the blind, because no assistance was wanting to carry it to perfection. " *The geometrician,*" she said, " *passes almost all his life with his eyes shut.*"

I have seen the maps by which she studied geography. The parallels and meridians were of brass wire; the boundaries of kingdoms and provinces were marked out by threads of silk or wool

more or less coarse; the rivers and mountains by pins heads, some larger, others smaller, and the towns by drops of wax according to the size of them. I one day said to her, "Mademoiselle, figure to yourself a cube."—"I see it," said she.—"Imagine a point in the centre of the cube."—"It is done."—"From this point draw lines directly to the angles, you will have divided the cube?"—"Into six equal pyramids," she answered, "having every one the same face, the base of the cube, and the half of its height."—"That is true, but where do you see it?"—"In my head, as you do."—I will own that I never could conceive how she formed figures in her head without colour.—Was this cube formed by remembering the sensations in touching it? was her brain become a sort of hand under which substances realized themselves? was a sort of correspondence established between two different senses? why does not the same correspondence exist in my head? and why do I see nothing in my head without colouring it?—What is the imagination of a blind person? This phenomenon is not so easy to be explained as one might suppose.

She wrote with a pin, with which she pricked a sheet of paper stretched upon a frame, on which were two moveable metal rods, that left between them only the proper space between one line and another. The same mode of writing served in answer, she read it by passing her fingers over the inequalities made by the pin on the reverse of the paper. She could read a book printed only on one

side; Prault printed some in this manner for her use. One of her letters was inserted in the Mercury, of the times. She had had the patience to copy with her needle the *Abrégé Historique* of M. Henault, and I have obtained from Madame Blacy this singular manuscript.

The following fact appears difficult to be believed, though attested by every one of her family, by myself, and twenty other persons still alive. In a piece of twelve or fifteen lines, if the first letter of every word was given her, with the number of letters of which each word was composed, she would find out every word, how oddly soever the composition might be put together. I made the experiment upon the Amphigouris of Collé. She sometimes hit upon an expression much happier than that used by the poet.

She would thread the smallest needle with great dexterity, placing the thread or silk on the index finger of her left hand and drawing it to a very fine point, which she passed through the eye of the needle, holding it perpendicularly. There was no sort of needle work that she could not execute; she made purses and bags, plain or with fine open work, in different patterns, and with a variety of colours; garters, bracelets, collars for the neck, with very small glass beads sown upon them in alphabetical characters. I have no doubt that she would have been an excellent compositor for the press; they who can perform the larger work can execute the smaller.

She played perfectly well at *reversis*, at *the mediator*, and at *quadrille*. She sorted the cards herself, distinguishing each by some little mark she had formed to herself, and which she knew by the touch, though they were not perceptible either to the sight or touch of any other person. The only attention required from the rest of the party was to name the cards as they played them. If at reversis the quinola was in danger, a gentle smile spread itself over her lips, which she could not restrain, though conscious of the indiscretion.

She was a fatalist, and thought that the efforts we make to escape our destiny only contribute to bringing it on. What, it may be asked, were her religious opinions?—I cannot tell; it was a secret which she kept to herself, out of respect for a pious mother.

Nothing more remains but to give you her ideas upon writing, drawing, engraving, and painting. I do not believe it possible to have any nearer to the truth. You will, I hope, form the same judgment when you read the following conversation, in which I am an interlocutor. She speaks first.

"If you were to trace on my hand the figure of a nose, a mouth, a man, a woman, a tree, I certainly should not be mistaken; I should not despair, even, if the likeness were exact, of being able to name the person you had sketched; my hand would become to me a sensible mirror; but great indeed is the difference between this canvas and the organ of sight. I suppose, then, that the

eye is a living canvas of infinite delicacy; the air strikes the object; from this object it is reflected towards the eye, which receives an infinite number of different impressions, according to the nature, the form, and the colour of the object, and perhaps the qualities of the air; these are unknown to me, and you do not know much more of them than myself; it is by the variety of these sensations that they are painted to you. If the skin of my hand equalled the delicacy of your eyes, I should see with my hand as you see with your eyes, and I sometimes figure to myself that there are animals who are blind, and are not the less clear sighted."

"But the mirror?"

"If all bodies are not so many mirrors, it is by some defect in their texture, which extinguishes the reflection of the air. I adhere so much the more to this idea, since gold, silver, fire, polished copper, become proper for reflecting the air, and that troubled water and streaked ice lose this property. It is the variety of the sensation, and consequently the property of reflecting the air in the matter you employ, which distinguishes writing from drawing, drawing from engraving, and engraving from painting. Writing, drawing, engraving, painting, with only one colour, are so many cameos."

"But when there is only one colour, how can any other colour be discerned?"

"'Tis apparently the nature of the canvas, the thickness of the colour, and the manner of

employing it, that introduces in the reflection of the air a variety corresponding with that of the forms. For the rest, do not ask me any thing more, I have gone to the utmost extent of my knowledge."

"And I should be giving myself a great deal of very useless trouble in attempting to teach you more."

I have not told you all respecting this interesting creature that I might have observed, if I had more opportunities of seeing and interrogating her; and I give you my word of honour that I have related nothing but what I witnesssed myself. She died at the age of twenty-two. With an astonishing memory, and a penetration equal to it, what a progress might she have made in the paths of science, if heaven had granted her a longer life! Her mother used to read history to her very much, and it was a function equally useful and agreeable to both.

M. Linguet has circulated among the public a project in manuscript, in which he proposes to the government a secret process for dispatching detailed orders from Versailles to Brest and Toulon, in as short a time as it would take a good writer to copy them five or six times over; and this without the possibility of the intermediate agent's penetrating the secret. He says that he shall not employ flags or fire, on any other means already known, but a very simple machine, which may be

used in two different ways, and the construction of which is so easy, that it may be repaired in case of need at any country village whatever. The expense of this new sort of post is so trifling, that the maintenance of it from Versailles to Brest will not cost more than twenty thousand livres annually. It is known that the project was presented to the King by M. de Beauveau and recommended by the Count d'Artois, but it is not known whether any experiment of it has been, or is intended to be, made. Whatever may be the result, if M. Linguet has not really and truly made the great discovery he so confidently promises, he has found the means, at least, of recalling the attention of the public to himself in a manner striking enough;—till this revival, he began to be somewhat forgotten. He has done still better, for he has just obtained, and this is another enigma, permission to quit the Bastille; nay even farther, to continue his journal. He is indeed forbidden to touch upon all matters of religion, of government, or of politics, but for his private amusement the philosophers and the Academy are abandoned to him.—Well, be it so!—Of whatever nature may have been the motive which occasioned his detention, it remains utterly unknown. His confinement has, however, doubtless been long enough, more than twenty months, to allow of his making all the reflections that may be useful to him, and he will scarcely be tempted to expose himself in like manner a second time.

Portrait of Doctor Tronchin.

Theodore Tronchin, born at Geneva, in 1709, of a noble family, originally of Avignon, died at Paris, the first of December 1781. He was first physician to the Duke of Orleans, a noble patrician of Parma, foreign associate of the Royal Academy of Sciences, &c. &c. He married, in Holland, the grand-daughter of the celebrated pensionary John de Witt, and at the age of twenty-four, while the scientific Boerhaave was still alive, had obtained the reputation of being one of the first physicians of Amsterdam.

Humanity has lost in him one of its greatest benefactors, friendship its most deserving model, and physic one of the most illustrious disciples Hippocrates has known in our days. He has left no work worthy of his genius and knowledge; but a select collection of his consultations will form a monument as glorious to his memory as it will be useful and interesting in the progress of the medical science. A considerable number of his prescriptions exist in the hands of his heirs, the greater part of them upon very remarkable occasions. Never did any physician consult nature more, or seize with more sagacity all its movements and indications; never did a physician employ more happily the secret of watching the efforts of nature and assisting them with the least pain and force possible. His principles, no less simple than enlightened, were always submitted to the most exact observation of what she suggested, and were modified accordingly. The

greater part of our physicians prescribe only for the disease, he prescribed for the person, and his method of treating the same disease was as various as the different circumstances that occur in different subjects. Few physicians have studied like him the influence of the moral upon the physical man, the necessity of managing the strength, of proportioning the resources to the means, the advantage of combating the principle of the disease, by removing out of the way whatever might contribute to cherishing and irritating it. Spare diet was almost always one of the first of his prescriptions. "*'Tis the best way,*" he said, "*to cut off the enewy's provisions; that is already a great point gained.*" The astonishing penetration of his glance, the habitual tranquillity of his mind, a character which was not natural to him, as he was by nature passionate, but which had been acquired through strenuous combats with his natural disposition, the firmness, the resolution which accompanied all his actions, the dignity of his features and deportment; all these advantages united, inspired his patients with the sweetest, the most consoling confidence. Those who knew him could not be surprised at the sort of enthusiasm of which he was often the object, an enthusiasm which served to spread with success several useful discoveries, particularly that of inoculation; on the other hand, it could not fail exposing him to the cabals, the hatred, and the jealousy of his competitors. However unjust many of them may have been towards him, they were

not all so; Petit and Louis owned that he was the greatest anatomist of the faculty; Rouelle said he was the most skilful man in pharmacy that he had ever known, and the celebrated Haller said he was the most fortunate of practitioners. Few of the sovereigns of Europe have not done him the honour of consulting him at one period or other; a short time before his death he received a letter from the Pope, thanking him for the advice he had given respecting some Cardinal who was his particular friend; the letter concluded with saying that there was no Catholic signature on which he set a higher value than on his.

A good father, a tender friend, a zealous citizen, he was unhappy in all these respects, nor can it be dissembled that his chagrins, which he concealed in the inmost recesses of his heart, preyed upon his health, and contributed very evidently to shorten the term of his existence. A Stoic in principle, chiefly from his admiration of the virtues practised by this sect, his sensibility was nevertheless extreme. Arrived at that point of self-command that he could bear physical ills with no less fortitude and constancy than the heroes of the Portico, he vainly endeavoured to support with like equanimity the pains of the heart; his efforts to attain it only concealed from others a part of what he suffered, and corroded his mind instead of soothing it. He had no less mildness in his character and manners than severity in his principles. Simple, affable, sometimes even more than popular

in his conduct, no citizen of his country was more attached than himself to the aristocratic maxims of the government; the fear of seeing Geneva fall again into democracy was one of the keenest sources of chagrin which he experienced in his latter days. With all the means of acquiring great riches, he has left but a very moderate fortune; benevolence and generosity were among the first necessaries of his elevated soul, and his contempt for riches was a virtue of instinct.

Absent from disposition, and perhaps also from the multiplicity of his occupations, although he had passed his life with the great, he either could not learn or would never assume the tone and manners of the great world. Sometimes too proud, sometimes too familiar in his manner, nothing less than the vast personal esteem borne him by every body could have procured a pardon for the many deficiencies of which he was guilty in this respect. Yet these transgressions against the little ceremonials of society were so well counterbalanced by the natural elevation of his mind, that far from injuring essentially the *tout ensemble* of his appearance, they rather gave an originality of character to his physiognomy than rendered it more engaging. He could not be esteemed the less, and there were occasions on which these very failings contributed to making him the more beloved.

There were only two things to which he made pretensions that could not be generally allowed; these were to being deep-sighted in politics, and to

playing well at whist. At the latter he rarely won and was perpetually making mistakes, but he did not the less entertain a high opinion of his own skill; though he certainly was so amply endowed in other respects, that he might have been very well satisfied to acknowledge himself defective in this. M. Diderot, as it appears to me, has devised the finest inscription that can possibly be put upon the statue of this great man; it is what Plutarch said of a physician of his time:—*He was among physicians what Socrates was among philosophers.*

June, 1782.

Although circumstances have not permitted me to collect all the curious and interesting facts and anecdotes which have been furnished by the stay of the Count and Countess of the North * at Paris, what I have learnt will enable you to form some idea of the impression they have made in the country. The account I will endeavour to give, without having any other merit than that of being exact and faithful, belongs essentially to the objects we have always had in view in these memoirs. The interest with which the heir of all the Russias has condescended to honour our letters and our arts, ought to form an epoch in the history of our literature. This history has furnished few events in our days so worthy of a lasting remembrance.

* Afterwards Paul the first Emperor of Russia. In his youth he made a visit to France under the title of the Count of the North.

If the imagination, struck with the immense extent of the states which this Prince is one day to govern, has formed its ideas of his person accordingly, it will be much surprised to find that he has not the stature of an Atlas or a Hercules; for, however polished we may be, we yet cling a little to our savage and gothic prejudices, and associate the idea of bodily powers with that of a mighty potentate. Much more have we been struck, and here French vanity has found great reason to be flattered, with observing in all his deportment the ease, the grace, and the polished manners of our court. Amid the almost importunate respect and homage he has received wherever he went, he has sometimes been surprised with hearing from the crouds by whom he was followed, that they did not think him handsome. This he himself related to the King with great gaiety, and in the most simple and natural manner possible, at the first supper his Majesty gave him, observing that the French nation had not less frankness, than politeness and urbanity. The Count of the North has not, it is true, the countenance and person which poets and romance writers would have thought it indispensable to give him; but he has what is better than mere regularity of features, an expression of great animation and intelligence, a physiognomy full of penetration and vivacity, and at times a roguish smile which renders it still more expressive, without diminishing in any degree the character of mildness and dignity for which it is so eminent.

So much has been said both in verse and prose of Minerva under the semblance of the Graces accompanying this prince, that one scarcely any longer dares venture to use the expression. There is none however which describes so well the sentiments that the Countess of the North inspires; it seems as if this expression had been framed on purpose to apply it to her, and was made for her alone, so that however old and worn out it may be, the justice of the application gives it the appearance of novelty. It is not complete portraits that we have undertaken to sketch, we only seek to recal some of the most striking features in the impression which the Count and Countess of the North have left on the minds of the Parisians,—of the people who, of all the nations in Europe, have the most sensibility but the least discretion.

Instruction is an advantage which princes in France are so accustomed to think may be dispensed with, that perhaps some grudge might be conceived against the Count of the North for being so well instructed. He has spared no pains therefore to conduct himself so that this defect may be pardoned; it might be said that he was only instructed, the better to please the nation which receives him with so much eagerness and attention. Our sciences, our arts, our manners, our customs, nothing with regard to these subjects appears strange to him, he seems perfectly well acquainted with all. Without any thing like study, or affectation in his behaviour, he is ignorant of nothing proper for him

to know, in order to appreciate justly the variety of objects which are constantly presenting themselves to his curiosity; or to take such an interest in the homage addressed to him as flatters the *amour-propre* of the whole nation at large, and of every individual who endeavours more particularly to render his visit agreeable. At Versailles he had the air of being as well acquainted with our court as with his own; in the work-rooms of our artists he displayed such a knowledge of the arts as gave a double value to the commendations he bestowed; in our lyceums, in our academies, he proved alike by his questions and by his compliments that there was no kind of labour in which he did not interest himself, and that he was perfectly well acquainted by name and reputation with all the men whose knowledge and talents have done so much honour to their age.

His conversation in general, and all particular sayings that have been retained, announce not only an understanding naturally good, and a well-cultivated mind, but an exquisite feeling with regard to all things relating to our customs, and to the delicacies of our language. We shall only cite some instances communicated to us by persons who have had the honour of being in his company and have themselves heard what they relate.

Among the number of obliging things said by him to several members of the French academy at the special sitting of this body which he honoured with his presence, his compliment to M. Males-

herbes must not be omitted. M. d'Alembert having presented this ancient minister of his Majesty; "*'Tis apparently here, Sir,*" said he, "*that you have retired.*" The most eloquent orator of the magistracy was quite astonished at so flattering an apostrophe, and could not find any thing to say in reply.

M. Diderot, not having been able to find him at his own apartments, went to see him at Mass. The Count, as he was going out, perceiving the philosopher, exclaimed, "*Ha! M. Diderot, you at mass!*"—"*Yes, Sire,*" replied the other, "*Epicurus was sometimes to be seen at the feet of the altars.*"

The Count d'Artois having shewn him some English swords of the finest temper, and the most finished workmanship, pressed him earnestly to accept the most beautiful. The Count of the North declined the present, but M. d'Artois still insisted on his accepting it, saying: "*How! will you not accept any one?*"—"*I will do more, if you will permit me,*" said the Count, "*I will ask for that with which you would have conquered Gibraltar.*"

The King was speaking of the troubles at Geneva. "*Sire,*" said the Count, "*it is to you a tempest in a glass of water.*" It was not then known how easy it would be to appease this tempest, even without overturning the glass.

The festivities given at Chantilly on occasion of the visit made there by the Count and Countess of the North, were in a stile of the utmost magni-

ficence, and of the highest taste. The Vaudeville which concluded the theatrical exhibitions pleased much, and was well adapted to the moment. The author, M. Laujeon, was very desirous of being introduced to the Count; this was made known to the latter when after thanking him in the politest manner possible for the entertainment he had received; "*Your verses are charming, M. Laujeon,*" said he, "*you make me say many very excellent things; *but there is an essential one which you have forgotten—a very essential one, and I cannot reconcile myself to it.*"—At every word spoken the poor author's trouble and confusion increased, when the Count, after suffering him to remain a few moments in the utmost embarrassment, added; "*You forgot to speak of my gratitude, and that is the sentiment which principally occupies my mind at this moment.*"

The Count having visited M. d'Alembert at his own house, did not forget that the philosopher had been invited to St. Petersburgh to preside over his education. At the conclusion of his visit he addressed himself to him in the most obliging manner possible, saying: "*You will I hope perfectly understand the deep regret I feel at this moment that I had not known you much sooner.*"

Of all the literati M. de La Harpe has had the honour of being the most in company with our illustrious visitor. In quality of correspondent with

* M. Laujeon had introduced the Count and Countess of the North themselves into the piece, under disguised names.

his Imperial Highness, he thought himself obliged to wait upon him almost every day. Such assiduity may perhaps be supposed to have been sometimes rather a heavy tax upon the Prince, but his politeness, combined with the happy complacency of the *savant* towards himself, prevented his ever imagining that he could be intrusive. "*M. de la Harpe*," said the Count, "*has already been to visit me five times, I have seen him three, I hope he will not be dissatisfied.*" In fact the visitor was tolerably well satisfied, for he was heard to say some days after in a circle at the house of Madame de Luxembourg; "*I have had two conversations with the Count of the North on the art of reigning, and I can assure you that I was very much pleased with him.*" It had been proposed that the Count should hear M. de Beaumarchais' *Marriage of Figaro* read; to this he seemed much inclined, but added: "*I dare not accept the proposal without first hearing the reading proposed to me by M. de la Harpe. We must not run the risk of embroiling ourselves with these great powers.*"

In the sitting of the Academy which their Imperial Highnesses honoured with their presence there was read, an epistle from M. de La Harpe to the Count of the North, a portrait of Cæsar by the Abbé, Arnaud, and another epistle of M. de La Harpe against descriptive poetry. M. Delille had promised to read some extracts from his poem, but with his accustomed absence forgot his engagement. It was undoubtedly that he might *make himself*

happy at the feet of some pretty woman; or perhaps to avoid hearing M. de La Harpe's verses, which he does not love, any more than M. de La Harpe loves his.

In the *Epistle to the Count of the North* there are certainly some fine passages, but the conclusion appeared worthy to be a madrigal of the Abbé Cotin, and their Highnesses train could not hear, without being wounded, the apostrophe to *Petrowitz*;* a word which sounds even more ridiculous to Russian ears, than strange to ours. When not preceded by some epithet which gives it distinction, it is no less familiar than the French *Toinette* or *Pierrot*, or the English *Jack or Tom.*

The *Portrait of Cæsar* was the piece which seemed to give the most pleasure to the illustrious travellers. The energy with which the ambition and the courage, the genius and the good fortune of the greatest man of antiquity are characterised, were well calculated to give it in their eyes all the interest of a *Family Picture.*

Several very happy details in the *Epistle on Descriptive Poetry*, could not prevent its appearing tedious as a whole. The talent of paying a very minute attention to the little decorums of society which so particularly distinguishes M. de La Harpe, could not suffer him to neglect so fair an opportunity of decrying the German poets, before a

* In the printed copies of this poem, the author has not suffered the word in question to remain, I believe more than once.

German princess who loves them, and whose sensibility would well know how to appreciate their merits, even if they did not belong to a country which is proud of having been the cradle of her infancy.

The Academy of Sciences, and that of Belles-Lettres, were nearly *equally happy* in the choice of subjects which they selected for the entertainment of their illustrious guests. In the former they were extremely *ennuyé* with a number of very disgusting experiments upon the nature of odours, and upon the manner of destroying fœtid ones. In the other, memoirs were read upon the antiquities of the southern countries, in which a very ingenious discussion was introduced upon the question, whether the people of the north have always been of a lower stature, and inferior in every way to those of the south.

However occupied the stay of their Imperial Highnesses has been by the desire they had not to omit seeing any thing interesting and worthy of their attention, and by the multiplicity of entertainments made for them every where, no attentions have been neglected by them towards any persons who had the best claim to expect them. One man alone has been known to make any complaints on this account, and this is the Sieur Clerisseau. The extravagant manner in which he behaved to the Count of the North at the house of M. de La Reynière is of a nature too original to be omitted. M. Clerisseau having had the honour of working

for her Imperial Majesty, thought that on this account her heir could not fail of receiving him with the most marked distinction. Impressed with this idea, he went several times to pay his respects to the Count but was never admitted;—this excited his utmost indignation. One day when the Count was to be at the house of M. de La Reynière, M. Clerisseau was invited, together with all the artists who had contributed to the embellishment of this charming abode. "*Count*," said our artist, in rather a free and easy manner, "*I have been several times at your door, but never could gain admittance.*"—"*I am extremely sorry, M. Clerisseau. The loss has been mine, I hope it will be compensated.*"—"*No, Sir, you have been denied because you did not chuse to see me, and I take that very much amiss;—but I shall write about it to your mother, I assure you,*"—"*I beg your pardon, believe me I feel very deeply how much I have lost.*"—M. de La Reynière was in the utmost confusion, but it was in vain that the people around endeavoured to check the enraged artist, and make him feel where he was, and who he was talking to; he still pursued the Count about the room, and nothing but being turned out could silence him. This is not the first quarrel he has had with crowned heads; he had one with the Emperor which yields in no respect to this.

The distractions of an immense capital, the attentions of a court occupied only with endeavouring to please and amuse them, and all the bustle of so

many magnificent entertainments, could not prevent their Imperial Highnesses perceiving the absence of that minister, whose genius and virtues seemed to promise such happy days to France;—that illustrious citizen whose administration will be yet for a long time the subject of our astonishment and regrets. They went to visit him in his retreat at St. Owen; the very day before, they had visited the hospital of *The Charity* founded by Madame Necker in the parish of St. Sulpicius. Every thing of the most flattering nature, which could be dictated by hearts deeply penetrated with the love of doing good, was said by them to the virtuous successor of Colbert, and the worthy companion of his life. The Count of the North had an hour's conversation alone with M. Necker, and left him impressed with a high idea of his knowledge, and zeal for every thing that interests the glory and happiness of the human race. Madame Necker has never found in any woman of this country, so much real solid knowledge and instruction as in the Countess of the North, nor does any one appear to her to possess in an equal degree all the essential qualities of the exterior, more amiable manners, or more true grace and sweetness. Mademoiselle Necker, witness to all the caresses which their Imperial Highnesses lavished upon her father and mother, was even melted into tears. Madame Necker seeing that this was observed by the Countess, said: "*My daughter alone ventures to express all the sensibility inspired by the condescension with which we are*

honoured."—"*Condescension, Madam,*" said the Count, "*I cannot permit that word; say rather my veneration for M. Necker!*" The hours passed by their Highnesses in M. Necker's retreat, seemed to leave the most pleasing impression upon their minds; they have never spoken of them but with the deepest interest.

It had been announced that the Count and Countess of the North would not eat with any private person, however distinguished their rank might be. Madame de Montesson flattered herself that an exception might be made in her favour, or rather that she might appear to enjoy, at least in this circumstance, the honour of being Duchess of Orleans. But their Imperial Highnesses, who would not on any account transgress the least etiquette, declined the invitation with all the politeness possible. Having been invited by the Duke of Orleans, they went to see the shows prepared for them by Madame de Montesson, with the enchantments of Comus, and some other amusements of the same kind, but then retired upon excuses which could not possibly give offence. So much company had been invited on this occasion that the theatre was filled up quite to the stage, and the Duke thought there was no place left either for himself or the Count of the North. He complained of this loudly behind the curtain, and, without shewing himself, desired, rather in a rude manner, *all* the company to retire;—the request was made thus general that no one might feel himself offended

individually. The compliment displeased the company extremely, it was addressed to almost all France, and was little expected from so affable and well-bred a prince. At first nobody would move, but presently after nobody would stay. It was remarked to the Duke of Orleans that he had been mistaken, and he then neglected nothing to repair a sally of ill-humour so foreign to his general character.

It has been a saying on this occasion that the King entertained the Count of the North as a friend, the Duke of Orleans as a *bourgeois*, and the Prince de Condé as a sovereign. This however is but a saying. Nothing could be more splendid, more worthy the magnificence of a great Court, than the dressed Ball, and the Opera of Iphigenia in Aulis, as they were executed upon the splendid theatre at Versailles; upon that theatre which is perhaps one of the most superb monuments of architecture produced under the reign of Louis the Fifteenth. The two vases of the porcelaine of Sèvre which the King presented to the Count of the North are of the most exquisite beauty; and the toilette presented by the Queen to the Countess is in an exquisite taste, and most highly finished. The articles belonging to it are all of porcelain mounted with gold, of a deep blue ground, ornamented with paintings after the antique, and round such pieces as would admit of a border is one imitating pearls and precious stones. The glass, on the top of which are the arms of Russia, has a

very rich drapery round it, and it is supported by the three Graces; two Cupids are playing at their feet, and one pointing to the glass appears to be saying, *she is still more lovely!* The sculpture which ornaments the two vases represents the march of Silenus, and the triumph of Bacchus;- they are executed in bronze with ornaments of *or-moulu.*

July 1782.

We have not been in a great hurry to speak of the *Confessions of Jean Jaques Rousseau.* Works of this kind have no occasion to be announced, they are already sufficiently so before they appear. What we want in our journal is a faithful account of the sensation they have produced, and this is the task I am about endeavouring to execute with all the impartiality I profess, in spite of the influence which seems attached to the trade of a journalist.

It is only the first part of these *Confessions* that we have to discuss at present; the second is not to appear till the year 1800. Such at least is the intention announced, though as there exist assuredly between France and Switzerland two or three manuscript copies, we may very well calculate upon some chance by which our curiosity may be sooner gratified. This first appears such as the author had written it, except some few trifling anecdotes which the modesty of Messieurs the Editors thought proper to suppress. If our literati, and still more

our philosophers are to be considered as of high authority; the wiser part would have been to suppress the entire book. The whole appears to them contemptible; it is not without evident reluctance that they allow beauty of style to two or three passages upon women, and upon the country; though, with all due respect to their authority, these passages may be said to present very fine paintings; romantic it is true, but sketched with eloquence and fire.

"How," say these gentlemen, "is it possible "to conceive that a man should write a book the "most certain effect of which is to reflect dishonour upon himself? The project can only have "been inspired by the most extravagant, the most "disgusting pride. What interest can the public "be supposed to have in knowing, that during his "apprenticeship with an engraver he stole apples "out of a pantry with great dexterity, or very ingeniously made water in his neighbour's saucepan?—Does it signify a rush to his readers to be "informed that he was in service at Turin, and "reproached himself all his life with having "accused the servant maid in the house of stealing "a silver ribband, which he had stolen himself? "Or is it of greater importance to learn that when "he was a preceptor at Lyons, he pretended to have "spoiled the good wine of Arbois, the care of "which had been confided to him, that he might "have it all to drink by himself in private;—or "that his sublime friend the Baroness de Warens

"having great sensibility of heart with great frigi-
"dity of constitution, quietly divided her favours
"between him and her gardener Claude Anet?—
"That at the death of this poor Claude Anet he
"(the author) was delighted with inheriting a fine
"black coat, with which their patroness had fur-
"nished the deceased a short time before his
"death;—or that at his return from a little tour
"into Provence, he soon saw himself superseded
"in the good graces of his friend by a journey-
"man barber, whose name was Courtille, notwith-
"standing which he consented to remain under her
"roof as the Mentor and friend of her new favou-
"rite, while by an excess of delicacy, which the
"lady perhaps thought rather ill-timed, he would
"never become his rival."

It is very true indeed, Gentlemen, that all this nonsense, all these impertinences, occupy a great part of the *Confessions of Jean Jaques*. Many others which you have not enumerated are not a whit better. Be it so, we allow all this;—but is it the less true that from so great a fund of nonsense, such as it is, Jean Jaques has made a book which is read with universal interest, and which people are glad to read over again, in spite of the contempt, in spite of the disdain with which you speak of it; in spite moreover of the express order you have given to the journals in your pay, not to say any thing of it either good or bad. We will even defy you all, Gentlemen, to venture upon an attempt of the kind, and execute it with equal success, how-

ever powerful may be the ascendency of your philosophy, and of the great talents you would devote to it.

"I have heard speak," said M. Watelet, "of "a cook in the Regent's service, who one morning "took it into his head to cut a pair of old slippers "to pieces, and make a ragout of them; the dish "was served up at table, and the whole Court found "it delicious. This is pretty much the same ex-"periment that Jean Jaques has made in his "Confessions, and it has been attended with nearly "as great success." In fact, all the courage of the philosopher of Geneva, was requisite to conceive the project of such an enterprise; and all the magic of his talents to render the execution interesting. But there is reason to believe that if the charm of style was the only merit of this singular work, it would not fascinate as it does even at a second reading.

In allowing that these Memoirs are full of impertinences, of extravagancies, of insipidities, of minutiæ, if you please of falsehoods, one of which we shall cite at the conclusion of this article, it would be difficult not to acknowledge that the author seems to have had the wish to exhibit himself to his readers exactly as he is, or as he seriously believes himself to be. With this intention the work cannot fail of a sort of interest. The manner in which such a man gives an account of himself, of his most secret sensations, of the first dawning of all his sentiments, all his affections, however

defective those sentiments and affections may be, and whatever prejudices may be mingled with them, will always offer useful instruction upon the art of observing ourselves and penetrating into the remotest sources, the most secret springs of our conduct and actions. Notwithstanding the difference there may be between men under certain points of view, they resemble each other so strongly in all the leading features, that we may feel very well assured, that the man who has observed himself the best, will also be the man who most thoroughly knows others.

How many interesting scenes, how many sensations long forgotten, both of our infancy and youth, does not the reading of these Memoirs recal to the mind; and what man is so unhappy as not to feel the charm attached to the recollection of them. What truth and vivacity is there in the history of the great Walnut-Tree upon the terrace at Bossey: what charming colouring in the picture of his first interview with Madame de Warens; in that of his timid and unfortunate amours with the beautiful shopkeeper at Turin; in the account of his brilliant hopes, founded upon the wonders of the fountain of Héron; in the animated description of his delight with *Friend Bacle*; and some years after with the brilliant *Venture de Villeneuve*; in the simple and seductive recital of the happy evening at Ionne between Mademoiselle Galley and his friend. What an excellent portrait is that of the Judge-Magus, Simon! Scarron's romance cannot boast

of one more truly comic. One which is scarcely less so, is the disastrous history of the concert at Lausanne, and the meeting with the Archimandrite of Jerusalem. But it were endless to enumerate the many interesting pictures he gives of a similar nature.

It is undoubtedly very probable, that Jean Jaques has more than once permitted himself to adorn the recital of his adventures with all that he presumed would contribute towards rendering them more agreeable. But a convincing proof, that if he has not always been strictly true he has almost always been perfectly sincere, is, that without appearing to have such an end in view, he says scarcely any thing of the circumstances of his life, of the particular dispositions of his infancy and youth, that does not serve to explain very naturally, all the eccentricities, all the well-known inconsistencies of his subsequent character and habits.

The development of his passions was extremely premature; and that of his reason equally slow. At eight years old he had read a vast number of novels, and this kind of reading gave him ideas of the passions singular at his age. "I had not," says he, "any idea of things, when every thing relating "to sentiment was perfectly well known to me. I "knew nothing; I felt every thing. The confused "emotions which I experienced one after the "other could not operate upon my reason, since as "yet I had none; but they formed me a sort of "reason of another stamp, and gave me odd and "romantic notions of human life, which experience

" and reflection have never been able wholly to " remove."

At five and twenty years of age he had not begun to follow any settled course of study. Abandoned entirely to his own powers, he was reduced to seek by himself the road to that knowledge he was desirous of obtaining. He characterises in the following manner the original turn of his mind and of his genius. " This tardiness of thinking, joined with " this vivacity of feeling, accompanies me not only " into conversation, but also into my labours. My " ideas arrange themselves in my head with incre- " dible difficulty; they circulate drowsily, they " ferment in a manner to create considerable emo- " tions, to heat me, to give me palpitations. In " the midst of this emotion I see nothing clearly, " I cannot write a single word, I must wait for its " subsiding. Insensibly this violent movement be- " gins to slacken, the chaos begins to arrange itself, " and every thing gets to its proper place, though " slowly, and only after a long and confused strug- " gle. Have you not sometimes seen the Opera " in Italy?—During the change of scene there " reigns a very disagreeable disorder in these large " theatres, which continues for a considerable " time; all the scenery is mingled pell-mell toge- " ther, one sees every where things dragged about " in a manner that gives pain; it seems as if " every thing would be overthrown. By degrees, " however, all is arranged, nothing is wanting, and " one is quite surprised to see a charming *spectacle*

"succeed to so much tumult and confusion. This "manœuvre is nearly what takes place in my head "when I write. If I had known at first how to "wait, and then give in all their beauty the things "that are painted there, few writers would have "surpassed me. But not only does it cost me "much trouble to paint my ideas, it costs me much "to receive them. I have studied men, and think "myself a tolerable observer. Yet I know not "how to see any thing of what I actually see; "I only see well what I recollect. Of all that is "said to me, of all that is done to me, of all that "passes in my presence, I feel nothing, I penetrate "nothing. The exterior sign is all that strikes me, "but every thing recurs to me afterwards; I can "recal the time, the place, the tone, the look, "the gesture, the circumstances, nothing escapes "me. Then, from what they said or did, I divine "what they thought, and I am rarely deceived."

The state of want to which he was exposed just as he had passed the age of infancy; the harsh treatment he received in his youth, after having been treated with great mildness in his earlier years; the wandering and vagrant life he led from the age of fifteen; the perpetual contrast between the romantic ideas that had so early seduced his imagination, and the troubles and humiliations which he was so long doomed to suffer;—all these causes combined could not fail to sour his character, to irritate his sensibility, and to render his temper gloomy and suspicious.

He has painted himself in many parts of his Memoirs with a great disposition to ingratitude; but this vice in him seems to have been much less the result of a depraved heart, than of the gloomy prejudices against human nature, which his misfortunes had inspired; these prejudices were carried at length to such an excess, that they could be called nothing but insanity. The germs of so melancholy a derangement are to be found already in his "*Confessions*;" but they are much more strongly developed, and in a manner still more distressing in his "*Walks of a Solitary Meditator*," and in that *ennuyeux* farrago of dialogues, which he calls "*Rousseau Judge of Jean Jaques*," or "*Jean Jaques Judge of Rousseau*."

The falsehood we have promised to detect at the conclusion of this article, is as follows: Rousseau, in speaking of the plan of a journey on foot into Italy with Messieurs Diderot and Grimm, adds, "All ended at last in making a tour in writing "only, in which Grimm found nothing so amusing, "as to make Diderot utter a great many impieties, "and have me thrown into the Inquisition in his "place."—This is doubtless a sprightly sally; but never was a trait of humour more unjustly disfigured. The fact is, that in this tour of invention the Baron d'Holbach played a very principal part, and it was to him that the first misfortune was to happen. He was to fall into a pit in preaching prudence to his friend Diderot; the latter was to be thrown into the Inquisition at Rome; Rousseau was to be

put under the leads at Venice; and M. Grimm, in despair at the misfortunes of his friends, was to go out of his mind, and to be shut up in the Mad-house at Turin. This is the only true version of the story; and I trust that I shall obtain some credit for having restored it, such as it is, in all its integrity.

For the rest, Jean Jaques is not the only celebrated man who has had the fancy of confessing himself to posterity. Saint Augustin set the example; and Cardan, the subtle Cardan, imitated him, in his book "*De Vita propria;*" a work full of folly and superstition, where may, notwithstanding, be found as many varieties, as many secret confessions, as many minute details, as in the Memoirs of Rousseau. He, as well as Saint Augustin, had, like Jean Jaques, a natural taste for thieving. There are Confessions still more extraordinary, in the *Adventures of the Sieur d'Assouci*, written by himself; a very scarce book, and bad enough to be deservedly so. A confession even more extraordinary, and assuredly more instructive, as well as more agreeable than any of those yet mentioned, is that which the Cardinal de Retz has made in his Memoirs; one given with so much ease, so naturally, and with so much simplicity, that he does not seem to think how dear it would have cost any other than himself to acknowledge the same things. "Is it possible to conceive," says the President Henault, speaking of the Cardinal's Memoirs, "that a man has the courage, or rather the,

" madness, to say more ill of himself than his " greatest enemy could possibly have said!" Self-love has always this courage, when it is sure that the impression made upon the public will compensate the writer's apparent sacrifice of himself, and it is undoubtedly this idea which has prompted the sincerity of all who have undertaken to write their own lives.

M. de la Roche, valet of the King's wardrobe, Governor of his Menagerie, and a Chevalier of Saint Louis, is one of the most faithful, but also one of the dirtiest servants of our King. He took it into his head one day to purchase a large flock of turkeys, which were extremely troublesome to his Majesty whenever he went to his Menagerie. *Who do all these turkies belong to?* said the King the other day. *To me, Sir,* answered the Governor. *Let me never see them here any more,* rejoined his Majesty; *or I will have you broke at the head of your company.* *

A person who deals in articles of millinery and other fashions, and who is reported to have an income of fifty or sixty thousand livres, is in danger of losing half his fortune by the bankruptcy of the Prince de Guemené. In relating this disaster to one of his friends in the Palais-Royal, *thus,* said

* It is to be observed, that to call a man a *dindon* (a turkey) in France, conveys the same kind of reflection as in England to call him a *goose.*

he, *shall I be reduced to live quite as a private gentleman.*

Two young physicians of Geneva, Messieurs La Roche and Odier, joined in partnership, and attended their patients in common. As they were not very fortunate practitioners, they soon came to be designated as the firm of *La Roche, Odier, Death, and Company.* M. La Roche is however not the less a man of considerable merit; he has written a little work upon *nervous complaints,* which is held in great estimation.

" I have seen," said the King of Prussia lately in a letter to M. d'Alembert, " I have seen the " Abbé Raynal. From the manner in which he " talked to me of the power, the resources, the " riches of all the people of the globe, I seemed " conversing with Providence. I took great care " not to call in question the most trifling of his " calculations; I perceived that he could not take " a joke, even with regard to half a crown.

Don Pablo d'Olivadès, a historical abstract, compiled from Memoirs furnished to M. Diderot by a Spaniard. *

Don Pablo Olivadès is a native of Lima, the capital of Peru. He was born with premature talents, a thing not at all uncommon in southern climates. He applied himself early to the study of

* This piece is not in the collection of Diderot's works.

the sciences, he cultivated letters from his earliest youth, and at twenty years of age arrived at the dignity of *Oydor* of Lima.

In 1748 or 1749 there was a great earthquake, in which all Callao and a considerable part of Lima were overthrown. Don Pablo at this time had in his care considerable sums of money belonging to different inhabitants who lost their lives in the calamity, and he judged proper to employ what was not reclaimed by any heirs in building a church, and a theatre, where the citizens might go and dissipate the sad impression of the catastrophe they had escaped. The clergy disapproved the erection of the theatre, and alleged it as a crime against him to the ministry at Madrid. *Hinc prima mali labes.*

Under the preceding reign, the clergy had acquired an unbounded ascendency over the mind of Ferdinand the Sixth. His confessor, Father Ravago, a Jesuit, persuaded him that the first, the most essential duty of a Catholic king, was to submit himself entirely to the will of the anointed of the Lord, and the good King would have fancied he saw hell open under his feet, if he had not conformed himself blindly to the counsels of Ravago. All the religion of this prince consisted in a minute attention to the practical parts of devotion, and those about him took care not, in undeceiving, to enlighten him.

It was consequently very easy for Ravago and his colleagues to make him consider Pablo as a

man devoid of religion or morals, as a monster of impiety, as a wretch deserving the severest punishment, because he had preferred erecting one church and one theatre to erecting two churches; Don Pablo was therefore summoned to Madrid, to render an account of his administration. His innocence being evident, and his conduct appearing irreproachable in the eyes of every person of common sense, he did not hesitate to obey the summons. He no sooner arrived in Spain, however, than the priests began to pursue him with the utmost virulence; he was put under arrest in his own house, charged with being an infidel, and a dissipator of the fiscal money, and at length conducted to the prison called the *Carcel de Corte*, where he was exposed to every kind of indignity that malignity and animosity could inspire. He soon began to suffer essentially in his health, and among other things, became swelled all over, particularly in his legs, to such a degree, that according to the opinion of the physicians he could not live without a change of air. The persecutions of the priests, and through their agency of the ministers, rendered this difficult; a generous citizen, however, Don Domingo Jauvegny, in giving a personal security, procured permission for the prisoner to be removed to Leganez seven leagues from Madrid, where the air is very pure and wholesome.

There was at Leganez a lady, who was the widow of two husbands, Donna Isabella de los Rios; the last husband had left her an immense

property. Women are by nature compassionate; Donna Isabella, touched with the misfortunes of a man who had youth, talents, and a good person to recommend him to her favour, offered him her hand; Pablo accepted it, on condition that the whole fortune was to devolve to the survivor, to which she consented, and they were married. Thus did he become enormously rich; and since in Spain, as well as in other countries, gold is the most powerful means of smoothing over all difficulties, especially those which originate with the clergy, he was soon set entirely at liberty; declared perfectly innocent, and acknowledged as a faithful and loyal subject to his King. Whatever philosophers may say, riches are good for something.

Don Pablo now employed a part of his wealth in carrying on a very extensive trade, associating himself with Don Michael Gigon, a knight of St. James, established at Paris, and Don Joseph Almanza, a celebrated merchant at Madrid. The society succeeded extremely well, and Don Pablo possessed more fortune than was requisite to live in a splendid manner. He furnished his house after the French fashion, and there reigned in it that ease and those polished manners which distinguish us so much above all other nations. Every year he took a journey to Paris, and after staying there some months, returned with all the novelties he had judiciously selected in the sciences, in literature, and the arts.

It was then that he conceived the project of

reforming the bad taste that reigned in the Spanish stage. He built a theatre in his own house, where were performed some of our best tragedies, translated into Spanish verse. Then it was that Madrid saw, for the first time, the plays of Merope and Zaïre, performed by young men whom he kept in pay, and whom he had taken infinite pains to instruct in good declamation. These performances were given gratuitously, and were attended by all the great people of the country. All sorts of refreshments were served at them, and the audience were often gratified with hearing the music of Duni and Gretry; *Ninette at Court*, and *The Painter in love with his Model*, were among the pieces which Pablo had translated into Spanish for performance at his theatre.

The Queen of Spain died in 1760 or 1761. The court of Madrid is at all times gloomy, and governed by a fatiguing etiquette, it is ten times more so in times of deep mourning; the public places are all shut, and even private amusements are not allowed. Don Pablo chose this time to take a journey into Italy. At his return to Madrid he was appointed corregidor of Seville, with the functions of inspector-general civil and political of the new colony in the Sierra Morena. This is an immense extent of country, situated between Andalusia and Estremadura, in a very fine climate, and with a soil so fertile, that it is capable of yielding three or four harvests in a year. The ministry began to conceive that the strength of the country

had been for a sufficient length of time in a constantly declining state, and that the population, the true wealth of a country, bore no proportion to the extent of the territory. It had consequently invited a number of Swiss Catholics to settle in the Sierra Morena, offering them the ease and freedom necessary to their success; vast numbers had accordingly established themselves there. They had formed two or three villages in the country, and in his quality of corregidor of Seville Don Pablo had the superintendence of the colony, and was to watch over the interests of the King.

Among the great number of Catholics had glided in a few Protestants, and it must be observed that religious fanaticism is no where carried to a greater height than among the Swiss Catholics. They are for the most part rude peasants, ignorant and superstitious to excess, intoxicated with the absurdities taught them by their pastors, people of the same stamp with their flocks, and capable of committing the most atrocious crimes in cold blood, for the propagation of their religion. It is proper farther to observe, that these Catholics are persuaded that the more masses are said over their bodies, the more secure are their souls of enjoying a quiet repose; and in consequence of this persuasion, their children are often deprived of the inheritance to which they have every possible claim, that the property may be left to the church to say masses for the departed soul.

Don Pablo, in order to correct what he thought

so great an abuse, published an ordinance, as corregidor, annulling every will charged with a pious donation to priests; they having, as he observed, ample stipends from the state, could not want these alms in addition. But there was a still more heinous subject of offence against him. These colonists, transported from a cold to a hot climate, soon became subject to diseases which carried them off by hundreds, so that the bell was ringing at every moment to announce some new demise. Don Pablo thought proper to suppress this ringing, as thinking it injurious and annoying to the living, particularly to those who were sick. He was then accused of indifference in matters of religion, of meddling with sacred things, and with tolerating Protestants among the colonists settled in the Sierra Morena.

The common lot of those who have renounced the world, a love of intrigue, inordinate ambition, proud cupidity concealed under the respectable exterior of devotion, set all the clergy in motion; and the King's confessor Father Osma, a Recolet monk, avaricious, ignorant, hypocritical, envious, a composition of all sorts of vices, put himself at the head of the furies and swore the destruction of Pablo.

When Charles the Third mounted the throne of Spain, in 1759, his first act of sovereignty fell upon the unlimitedpower of the Inquisition. This monarch was then surrounded by wise men, who demonstrated to him that this State within the State,

in opposition to his authority, was a primary source of the prejudices, the terror, and the imbecility that reigned in the country. He in consequence forbade the Inquisitors to decide definitively upon any subject whatever, without its first obtaining his sanction. Don Quintano bishop of Pharsalus was banished for some months for having proscribed I know not what work without the consent of the monarch, and he was forced to have recourse to submissions, exceedingly humiliating, and often repeated, before he could obtain his recal. The Government now flattered itself that the Inquisition being put upon the same footing as at Venice, where three senators assist at the decisions, speaking first and giving the tone, this powerful tribunal would soon be reduced at Madrid to a mere bugbear.

In this critical conjuncture for Don Pablo the Inquisitor-General died, and the question was to appoint a successor. Father Osma the Recolet, solicited it for himself, very certain that it would be refused, since he administered very much to the King's pleasures, a circumstance not exceedingly to his honour. He thought however that he should be permitted to appoint any one he chose, and this was exactly what happened. Osma represented to his sovereign that there was no person in the church, or in the empire, so proper for the place as the bishop of Zamora; but he had previously informed the bishop of what he intended to do, and advised him to reject the office with dis-

dain, saying that in the actual state of things, as the grand Inquisitor was prevented separating the tares from the good grain without exposing himself to the rigour of the laws, he could not in conscience preside at a tribunal so completely dishonoured; that a prince who had forgotten the interests of Christianity to such a point must be himself alone answerable for all the crimes occasioned by his culpable indulgence, and must submit to the punishment incurred in the sight of God. The monarch intimidated, revoked the edict he had passed in 1760, and the Inquisition rose from its ashes, as may well be presumed, more cruel and ferocious than it had ever been before.

The old age of the king is always a great misfortune to the people, and no where more so than in Spain. Does this arise from the etiquette of the court, which does not permit of the monarch being instructed in his youth? Is it that at his birth he sucks the milk of superstition? that in proportion as he becomes enfeebled, the religious mummeries in which he was nurtured gain a more powerful empire over him? that the heat of the climate gives more vigour to these causes? or that in such climates the race sooner becomes worn out?

A victim was necessary to the new Inquisitor, and Don Pablo presented the very thing he wanted. He was seized, and his condemnation was pronounced before his detention. He was examined and all the actions of his life both public and private were represented in the most odious colours. His

library and manuscripts were searched;—among the library were found the works of Montesquieu, of Voltaire, of Rousseau, Bayle's Dictionary and the Encyclopedia, and among the papers, translations of some of these works. It was then indeed that the outcry was raised, he was dragged from the court prisons into the dungeons of the Inquisition, and all his property was seized both moveable and immoveable. This tribunal will not suffer any one to learn to think; it requires that they learn to believe, and that they should be ignorant of every thing except their supreme power and prerogatives. Don Pablo, accused and convicted of a philosophical spirit, was condemned to make the *amende honorable* clothed in a *San-benito*, and to be hanged till he was dead. The rigour of this sentence was afterwards softened to being scourged through the town and imprisoned for life and this was subsequently reduced to his being degraded from his nobility and shut up in a convent, where he was to be clothed in hair cloth, and subjected to all the rigours of a monastic life.

Don Michael Gigon, the friend and associate in trade of Pablo, some time after obtained from his gaolers an attestation of his good conduct; a composition was made with the Inquisitors, and the culprit, by the sacrifice of a good sum of money, obtained his liberty, the restitution of a part of his property, and permission to throw aside his rough garment.

We have given this sketch of the misfortunes

of Olivadès to shew men how dangerous it is to do good against the taste of the Inquisition, and to warn them to be cautious how they proceed wherever this tribunal subsists.

M. d'Alembert being once upon a visit at Ferney, where also was M. Huber, it was proposed as a pastime that each of the party should tell a story of robbers. The proposal was agreed to, and M. Huber began; his story was received with great applause, and M. d'Alembert, who followed next, invented one which was not less applauded. When M. de Voltaire's turn came, he began: "*Gentlemen, there was once a farmer-general—I beg your pardon, I have forgotten the rest.*"

A miser, who was not less attached to his pleasures than to his money, had some difficulty to reconcile two inclinations so much at variance, and the combats between which were the torments of his life. The method he took to arrange the matter was this. He had made it a law to himself never to expend above a certain sum annually. When some fancy exposed him to the temptation of infringing this law, he held a conference with himself, and then going down upon his knees before his strong-box, stated to it in the most pathetic manner the great want he was in of some extraordinary assistance, begging as a loan the sum he wanted. But as a security to himself for returning the money, he always deposited in the strong-box a

diamond ring which he wore upon his finger, and never permitted himself to resume it till, by economy in his other expenses, or by some new speculation, the full sum was returned for which the pledge was laid down.

Tom Jones in London, a comedy in verse of five acts, by M. Desforges, was performed for the first time at the Italian Theatre, on Tuesday the twenty-second of October; it was received at length with great applause, after having been in danger of condemnation before the end of the first act, indeed almost in the first scene. The subject of this comedy is sufficiently announced by its title. The author has followed as faithfully as he possibly could the fable in Fielding's charming novel; he has confined himself only to retrenching some of the characters that are unimportant in conducting the main intrigue, and which could hardly have been brought upon the stage without overcharging the piece, and somewhat wounding decorum.

The dialogue of the comedy though it cannot be called brilliant is lively and easy; if the style often fails on the side of elegance, it is almost always clear and natural. The characters are varied, and well supported; perhaps sufficient credit has hardly been given to the author for venturing to preserve that sort of local truth which renders them so spirited in Fielding's work. If the character of Western appears too rustic, the fault is rather to be charged upon the actor, who not having been

able to seize the true genius of it put more caricature into his action than properly belonged to the words.

M. Patte, architect to the Prince of Deux-Ponts, has just published a pamphlet in-8vo. entiuled: *An Essay upon Theatrical Architecture, or Strictures upon the most advantageous Manner of constructing a Theatre, relative to the Principles of Optics and Acoustics.* After criticising in terms of great moderation the principal theatres in Europe, the author examines what form is most convenient for the part of the theatre allotted to the audience, and he determines that the elliptical figure is to be preferred, observing that this must not be confounded with the oval. This form he says has the advantage of concentrating the voice in all its fulness towards the audience. The work appears full of useful hints and ingenious observations.

December, 1782.

I remember to have heard the Abbé Mably say some years ago that the class of society here in which he had found the greatest number of respectable men, was the hackney-coachmen. Under the yoke of oppression they preserve a perfect freedom of soul, they support their rights with their fists, and say when occasion calls them forth the most abusive things possible to every one that falls in their way, without exception of rank or person. When we read the work he has just published upon

The Manner of Writing History, we can no longer be astonished at a preference so well motived. After the example of his heroes the Abbé Mably resigns himself without regard to merit, rank, fortune, or any thing else, to all the sallies of his ill-humour; there is no name, no reputation, which can check the freedom of his pen. Our most distinguished writers are treated by him as mere scholars, and indeed the pleasure of passing so gross a censure seems to have been one of the principal reasons that prompted him to take up the pen. What else in fact do we learn? That in order to write history well, it is essential first to have studied politics and the theory of natural rights, to be well versed in morals, in the progress of the passions, and in the character proper to each. And was it worth while writing a book to tell us nothing but truths so common and so trivial?—Something more stimulating, or at least more new, is to be found in the estimate he has permitted himself to make of M. de Voltaire. "What astonishes me more," he says, and I for my part know not who will not be astonished at a like judgment,—"What as-"tonishes me more on the part of this historian, "the patriarch of our philosophers, and who is "represented to us as the most powerful genius "our nation ever produced is, that he was a man, "if I may be pardoned the expression, *who did* "*not see to the end of his nose.*"—As to the proofs by which he justifies the boldness of so happy an expression, they are such as you could never possi-

bly guess. Attend then.—" If M. de Voltaire *had* " *seen to the end of his nose* could he have remark- " ed, with *surprise*, that the Christians resigned " themselves up to their vengeance, even when " their triumph under Constantine ought to have " inspired them with the spirit of peace?—Oh ad- " mirable knowledge of the human heart!"—Thus exclaims Cidamon, bursting into a laugh, for our Abbé has the pretension of making his strictures into a sort of dialogue. " Oh admirable know- " ledge of the human heart!—Your historian then " does not know, what no one is ignorant of, that " prosperity extends and multiplies our hopes. " Would he have had the Christians, without me- " mory, and without resentment, forget in an in- " stant all the ills they had suffered?—This *well-* " *advised and prudent man* would doubtless have " counselled them to revenge themselves when " idolatry was once more upon the throne, at the " moment when it was to be feared,—would have " had them enlighten, and not irritate it, to render " themselves worthy of being tolerated."

In admiring the light and airy style of the Abbé Mably's raillery, one ought certainly to pardon him for not having better seized that of M. de Voltaire; but it is difficult to comprehend how the enemy of the philosophers, the sage and circumspect writer who always makes it his duty to speak with the utmost respect of religion and its ministers,—how such a man should only expect to see in the zeal of triumphant christianity the ordinary

march of the human passions. It is, then, *ridiculous* to be astonished at the contradiction which reigns between the conduct of the disciples of Jesus and the principles of their doctrine. This doctrine, then, is but like many others, it leaves us all our prejudices, all our passions, and does not make us one whit better than it found us. There is reason to think, M. l'Abbé, that Voltaire judged pretty much as you do, but was it becoming in you to arraign him because he expresses himself, sometimes at least, with more reserve than you think necessary?

Another equally palpable evidence brought forward of the bounded views of M. de Voltaire, is his having said, *that the voluptuous court of Leo the Tenth, which might wound the eyes, served at the same time to polish Europe, and render men more sociable.* "Indeed," cries the Abbé, "this is "the first time I ever heard that society was im-"proved by vices, and not by virtues."—Did you then, M. l'Abbé, never hear the ages of Alexander and of Augustus mentioned? The men of these two ages were, as it appears to me, sufficiently polished, but were they the more virtuous? Some day, perhaps, the secret may be discovered of rendering the human race wiser and more enlightened; but hitherto the progress of society, in multiplying our wants, has almost always multiplied our vices; our knowledge and lights have never been able to extend themselves without giving occasion to new means of abusing them. It is not asserted that

society is improved by vices, but that society, as it improves, gives rise to the birth of new virtues and new vices.

It is in the same spirit that M. de Voltaire says, *that the Swiss were ignorant of the arts and sciences that owe their origin to luxury, but that they were wise and happy.* This he surely might say very well, without being the partisan of luxury. There are different degrees of wisdom and happiness; he who restrains his wants is more *securely happy* than he who has a great many; but it must be allowed that he has less enjoyment, less happiness. It is, however, from criticisms of this nature that the Abbé Mably has considered himself authorized to conclude, that "The reasonable "maxims which sometimes escape from M. de "Voltaire only serve to prove the shallowness of "his sense. His works present only half truths, "which are in fact errors, because he always gives "them too much or too little compass; nothing is "presented in its just proportions, or painted in "its true colours. If disposed to pardon his bad "politics, his bad morality, his ignorance and his "boldness, we should yet expect to find in a his-"torian wit enough not to exhibit his characters "making grimaces, taste enough to know that his-"tory never ought to be the vehicle for buffoone-"ries. His *Universal History* is a pasquinade, "worthy of readers who admire the creeds of our "modern philosophers; in his history of Charles

" the Twelfth, the hero acts always without know-
" ing why, and the historian marches like a mad-
" man at the heels of another madman."

Nor is M. de Voltaire the only modern historian whom the Abbé Mably permits himself to arraign with so much harshness and bitterness, he despises them all, with the sole exception of M. de Vertot; but he leaves it to the reader to find out as he can, the motive of an exception so difficult to be merited. In Hume's history he sees nothing but " unconnected facts, which escape his me-
" mory; it is a work which, whether from igno-
" rance of his art, whether from indolence or
" slowness of comprehension, the author has only
" sketched; it is a labyrinth without issue."—Gibbon is yet more severely handled. " Is there
" any thing more fastidious than a certain Mr.
" Gibbon (what elegance of style!) who, in his
" *eternal History of the Roman Emperors*, sus-
" pends at every instant his tedious and insipid
" narration to explain the causes of the facts you
" are about to read; who entangles himself in his
" subject, not knowing either how properly to be-
" gin or to finish it, and turning back continually
" upon himself?"—Even the deep-sighted Robertson cannot find favour in the eyes of our censor. The *Introduction to the History of Charles the Fifth*, considered by every one but himself as such a masterly performance, " is but a frothy work,
" where nothing is properly investigated. What
" proves indubitably that the writer did not under-

" stand any of the authors he cites, is, that he " adopts at once different opinions, which can- " not be made to agree, and which form, when " put together, a perfect historical gallimawfry." *The Philosophical and Political History of the Trade to the two Indies* is condemned upon the title alone. " How is it possible that the author " should not have written a bad work, since he is " ignorant that all rational history ought to be *po-* " *litical and philosophical*, without affecting to ap- " pear so."

But we are weary of giving extracts only of low abuse, though in giving any extracts it is impossible to do otherwise, since there is nothing else curious in the work. The judgments of the author upon the ancient historians are more equitable, but contain scarcely any thing worthy to be remarked. He proposes with reason Thucydides and Livy as the most perfect models in the art of writing history, but the manner in which he discusses the merits of these two historians is equally wanting in depth and clear-sightedness. Although he owns that Tacitus deserves to be called the greatest painter of antiquity, this historian still leaves, according to him, much to be desired. " In open- " ing his annals," he says, " I am not prepared for " the dark policy of a tyrant, who thinks he is " never powerful enough, yet is always afraid of " appearing too much so. I see the most deplora- " ble despotism forming; but I cannot see the aim " of it. I am weary with the almost uniform cru-

" elty and injustice of which I read; and I do not " see the necessity of multiplying these details, to " make me know Tiberius, his court, the shame- " ful patience of the senate, and the base submis- " sion of the people."

One may on this point concur in opinion with the Abbé Mably; one may concur with him upon many others; but it is impossible not to be disgusted with the manner in which he speaks of writers, who do so much honour to the age and to their respective countries. Granted, that no modern historian may have equalled the great models of antiquity, and this is a truth to which it is not difficult to give assent; it would have been much more interesting to explain in what respects they are inferior to them, than merely to say that they are so. Granted, that the works of M. de Voltaire may not be very well calculated to teach history to those who are not previously tolerably well read in it,—that he has not studied our ancient annalists with as much patience as the Abbé Mably, and this we are ready to allow;—will it be the less true, that M. de Voltaire has gone into a great deal of most enlightened and profound criticism upon the study of history in general,—that, no one has drawn together with equal interest the great results presented by the history of the revolutions in the minds and manners of different nations,—that, in fine, if he be not a perfect historian, he has not the less written most charming works upon history, full of instruction, of philosophy, and humanity?

Many people have remarked with surprise, that the Abbé Mably's ill-humour with M. de Voltaire has waited till four years after the death of the latter to break out; but they are people *who do not see to the end of their nose.* Would these *wise and prudent men* have advised him to attack M. de Voltaire while he was *still to be feared,* when such a temerity might have exposed him to seeing himself covered with eternal ridicule? No!—we know well, that the class of persons whose *frankness and respectable independence* are so much admired by the Abbé, never permit themselves to insult gentlemen, but when they think they are sheltered from all danger of correction; and this calculation, as we have seen, is that of profound policy.

All the letters of gallantry of the Chevalier d'Her.... are of no value whatever in comparison with one of the same stamp just put into circulation. It is the production of the president of a sovereign court; and from the knowledge we have of the talents and style of the man, we think we may pledge ourselves for its authenticity. Our president kept Mademoiselle Desorages; but as he only paid her fifteen louis a month, he was obliged to consent to her receiving thirty from a farmer-general, who shared with him the honour of her favours. Whenever the financier arrived, the president was obliged to disappear. One evening the man of thirty louis made his appearance so unexpectedly, that the man of fifteen had no time to get away, and was obliged

to hide himself behind the curtain of a window, which was open, and was down to the ground. The room was on the first floor, and looked upon a public garden. Our president was as quiet in his retreat as the lady could possibly desire; but, in passing by the curtain, she gave him such a violent thrust with her fist, that it forced him to leap out at the window. The next morning she received the following letter from her unfortunate lover.

"Mademoiselle.—The thrust you gave me "last night in my back with your fist has not gone "out of my head, and I believe that I shall be "lame with it all my life. Be contented, then, "that I cannot love you any longer, and do not be "surprised if I cease to visit you. 'Tis in these "sentiments that I shall be all my life, your tender "and faithful lover, the president de * * *."

Louis the Fifteenth asked one day of Gradenigo, the ambassador from Venice: "How many mem-"bers does your council of *ten* at Venice consist "of?"—"*Of forty!*" answered the ambassador. The king paid no more attention to the answer than to his own question. These absences, which proceeded entirely from the timidity of his character, and the confusion he was in at every kind of parade and ceremony, can never obliterate the remembrance of many things full of grace and acuteness of mind uttered by him upon other occasions.

A Memoir upon the Northern Passage, containing also Reflections upon the Formation of Ice, by the Duke de Croy. A pamphlet in 4to.

Never perhaps were so many dukes and peers occupied with the arts, and with useful knowledge, as at this moment, and the good Abbé de Saint-Pierre would say at present with a very ill grace, *that we are yet to learn in France what use can be made of dukes, and of horse-chesnuts.*

The memoir of the Duke de Croy contains many curious and important reflections upon the different sorts of ice, and their formation, and upon the causes of the greater degree of cold, and the greater quantity of ice about the south pole than about the north. The Academy of Sciences seems to have adopted his opinion upon this passage, sought with so much perseverance by the most celebrated navigators. The opinion is in few words this: "If a passage by the north exists, it "is never free so as to be practicable, and never "can be of any utility for trade or navigation." It is a result the proofs of which must be read in the memoir itself; they are explained in a manner so concise, that it would be almost impossible to give an extract without copying the work.

A Collection of interesting Pieces, relative to the Reigns of Louis the Fourteenth and Louis the Fifteenth. One vol. 12mo. embellished with several portraits carefully engraved by Le Bert, from the designs of Dugoure.

The editor of this collection is M. de La Borde, formerly valet-de-chambre to the King, the author of several operas, and of the *Essay upon the History of Music*. Here are all the documents relative to the trial of Henry de Talleyrand Count of Chalais, who was beheaded in 1626. These pieces, copied according to the original titles preserved in the library of the Marshal de Richelieu, may serve to elucidate some very interesting points of history. Here are, for example, evident proofs that the Marquis d'Ornano died a natural death in the prison of Vincennes, and not by poison, as almost all the historians give reason to suspect.

The letter of Marion de Lorme, which concludes this collection, is a sort of historical romance, the principal object of which is to render credible the account given in the *Essay upon the History of Music*, according to which this celebrated woman was born in the year 1606, on the fifth of March, and did not die till the fifth of January 1741. It is very certain that at the epoch last mentioned, a woman died at an extreme old age who bore the name of Marion de Lorme, and who remembered, as she said, having seen Cardinal de Richelieu, at the court of Louis the Thirteenth:—without assistance, without relations, she lived upon the alms of the parish. These facts are perfectly authenticated by the mortuary register of the parish of Saint Paul, and by the testimony of many persons who knew her during the latter years of her life.

January, 1783.

It is well known that the house of Rohan has long pretended to the title of a sovereign house. Some one was speaking to the Duchess of Grammont of the dreadful bankruptcy of the Prince of Guemené, a bankruptcy which seemed to surpass in audacity, the resources of the richest and most illustrious individuals of Europe. "It is to be "hoped," said Madame de Grammont, "that, at "least, it is the last pretension of the house of "Rohan to sovereignty!"

After the irreparable losses which our literature has sustained during some years, there is hardly any which can appear indifferent to us; I think however that we ought to confine ourselves to giving here only a short account of men of letters who have been carried off within the last year.

Jean-Baptiste Bourguignon d'Anville, first geographer to the king, member of the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles Lettres, fellow of the Society of Antiquaries in London, and fellow geographer to the Academy of Sciences, was born at Paris, July 11th 1697, and died January the 28th 1782.

He possessed more of the erudition than of the science of geography. He knew little of geometry, still less of astronomy. To the perusal of the Greek and Roman authors he owed the greater part of his discoveries. The different maps which he has given us of Italy and Greece are so many

master-pieces of exactitude and precision. He collected together an immense number of maps; they were all purchased by the king, a few years ago, who allowed him the enjoyment of them during his life time. The arrangement of this collection was his last labour. Although his character was modest and gentle, he could ill endure the slightest contradiction on that subject, which had occupied him solely from his earliest infancy; but self-love thus concentrated runs little risk of giving, or receiving offence.

During the lapse of many years we have scarcely had one new tragedy. Even those which display the greatest talent, serve to confirm an observation often recalled to our minds, on frequenting our different theatres; this is, that the circle of combinations of which our dramatic system seems susceptible, is extremely limited; that our resources are exhausted; and that, at this day, it is perhaps impossible, even to genius itself, to obtain success in the career, without finding out some path entirely new. If M. Ducis, guided by Sophocles, made a happy attempt at novelty in his *Œdipus at the Court of Admetus*, supported by the genius of Shakespeare he has aspired yet more boldly in his King Lear. In truth, could a more extraordinary idea be entertained than that of venturing to produce upon the French stage, the picture of a King despoiled by his own children, and who, reduced to despair by his misfortunes, is

become at length mad and idiotic. However justly we may criticise the plan and conduct of the work, we must surely allow some merit to an author who has succeeded in exciting our interest by a picture, so new, so bold, but at the same time so true and so profoundly tragic? Such a reflection would, however, be ill justified by the analysis of this singular work. In representing the piece divested of the illusion which alone can render the improbabilities, the inequalities, and even the absurdities supportable, we are obliged to give an idea of the impression which it appeared to make notwithstanding all its faults, upon every heart not wholly devoid of sensibility.

This tragedy, performed at court on Thursday 16th, was represented for the first time at Paris, on Monday 20th. In the first act, the scene represents the castle of the Duke of Cornwall. M. Ducis has rejected in the above scene all that constitutes the principal part of the first act in the English piece. The King has already divided his kingdom between his two daughters, Goneril and Regan. The first is married to the Duke of Albany; the second to the Duke of Cornwall; the third who is disinherited by her father, does not marry, as in Shakespeare, the King of France. Persecuted by her father and sisters, she has no other asylum than the cave of an old Hermit, situated in a forest belonging to the castle, where the Duke of Cornwall comes to establish himself with the Duke of Albany, to observe more narrowly the

movements of the rebels, who are assembled in this country to favour, as it is supposed the invasion threatened by Ulric, King of Denmark. This Ulric is the husband which Lear had destined to his daughter Elmonde.† He is made to fear the dangerous effect which such a marriage might have upon the repose of England; and no sooner was this projected union broken, than Elmonde is accused of keeping up a secret and traiterous correspondence with that prince. This piece of calumny serves as a pretext for banishing the Princess and is the cause of all her misfortunes.

We do not reproach M. Ducis with having supposed all these events previous to the commencement of the Poem; still less do we reproach him with giving motives less frivolous and puerile, for the injustice of Lear towards Elmonde. But we can scarcely pardon him for perplexing a narrative, which cannot already be understood without an uncommon degree of attention, and which, even when examined with the greatest attention, does not appear the more clear or interesting.

It is useless to observe how romantic and unnatural is the winding up of the plot, how vicious is the general conduct of the work, how unconnected are its different parts; the piece of Shakespeare, full of episodes, far more complicated, infinitely more extravagant, is yet more clear and more con-

† M. Ducis has changed the name of Cordelia to that of Elmonde, and has introduced a certain Ulric not to be found in the tragedy of Shakespeare.

sistent. If, in this singular production, all that required wit and judgment appears as ill executed as conceived, we must also allow that all which only supposes genius, sensibility, and that dramatic instinct whose sublime heights reflection alone can attain, far transcends any thing we have for a long time witnessed at the theatre. M. Ducis did not know how to combine a plot; he was ignorant of the art of happily linking together all those circumstances that compose an interesting and natural action; but his talent has discovered resources independent of this art; he has found them in a sensibility, gentle, lively, and profound. If he has disposed the events of the scene ill, he has prepared the impressions intended to be conveyed admirably. The spectator is compelled to enter into the feelings of the author, and this secret which M. Ducis has only learned from his own heart, is well worthy those of Aristotle and of the Abbé d'Aubignac. Although the most beautiful scenes of the second, third, and fourth acts, are anticipated by Shakespeare, M. Ducis has given them an air of originality; the developments of the last act are entirely his own, and are, without doubt, among the most original conceptions that have ever been ventured on the French stage.

In this piece it may be said that there are only two characters, those of Lear and Elmonde; or to speak more correctly, there is only one, which is the first mentioned; and this is supported in a wonderful manner by the Sieur Brizard. The tone

of his voice at once noble and natural, the simplicity of his action, his fine head and venerable white locks, all contribute to increase the interest, and to impart to his most simple gestures something commanding and august. Madame Vestris, who plays the part of Elmonde appears to great advantage in the last scene of the third act.

The piece has been well received in the city and at court. The author was desired to appear; but not earnestly, as the last act did not succeed so well as the preceding ones. Notwithstanding this, he had the weakness to make his appearance at the very time when it was least desired; for the performer commissioned to announce the second representation of the play, had just informed the public that peace was signed.

M. Dugazon ridiculed the vanity of the author's appearance in the after-piece; he pronounced also an impromptu on the peace; the author of this trifle applauded and inquired for by the pit, hastily retired behind the side scene, and immediately reappeared supported by one of his brother actors, with all the grimaces of a modest author embarrassed at his own glory.

The assembly of the French academy, on the 16th of January, gave the prize of utility to *The Conversations of Emilia*, by Madame d'Epinay; this prize was instituted by an anonymous citizen, whose name is known to all the world, M. de Monthion, chancellor to the Count d'Artois. The atten-

tion of the judges appears to have been divided between different works: a book by M. Daubenton upon sheep; another by M. Parmentier, upon potatoes; *Adèle et Théodore*, by Madame de Genlis; *The Children's Friend*, by M. Berquin, &c. but it was soon decided that sheep and potatoes did not come under the cognizance of the French Academy, and ought to have been referred to the Academy of Sciences. The question, therefore, remained between the work of Madame de Genlis and that of Madame d'Epinay: the last without doubt was the most worthy of success, as being the most useful, and the most original. We have better treatises upon education than the romance of *Adèle*, but none to place in the hands of children that can be compared with the *Conversations of Emilia*. Translated with success into many languages, this excellent work has already received the seal of public approbation. It has obtained the most august suffrages; Catherine the Second has given it a place amongst the number of elementary works designed for the instruction of young persons, whose education she disdains not to superintend. Last year her Majesty testified her satisfaction to the author in a manner the most judicious and flattering, by sending to her pupil and grand-daughter, the Countess Emilie de Belzunce, her imperial cypher in a medallion set with diamonds. This distinction accompanied with all the graces which give to the numerous good actions of this great sovereign, an extraordinary degree of

interest, was one of the highest compliments that could be paid.

The decision of the Academy astonished no one but Madame de Genlis, who could not conceive it possible, that the prize of utility should be withheld from a work which contained all the principles relative to the education of princes, and of young persons of both sexes, exemplified in the sublime romance of Adèle. She consoles herself at present for the disappointment, by attributing it to her having spoken too favourably of religion, and too lightly of philosophy. In fact, there is some reason to believe that philosophy rejoiced in an opportunity of humbling the pride of Madame de Genlis, and of teaching her that she could not slight her oracles with impunity. It is sweet to unite the pleasure of justice with that of revenge. But how could the vengeance of philosophy wound the high piety of our illustrious governess? Can she who renounces the toilet, rouge, and all the pleasures, all the vanities of life, still regret its frivolous and profane laurels?

Of the eighteen judges who composed the Academical Areopagus, Madame d'Epinay had ten or twelve votes: Madame de Genlis three or four; M. Berquin two; M. de la Croix, for his *Reflections on the Origin of Civilization*, one; M Moreau for his *Treatise upon Justice*, that tedious *Commentary on the History of France, for the use of our King*, one. It is worthy of remark, that M. de Tressan, after having solicited from house to house

the suffrages of his brothers in favour of his cousin Madame de Genlis, ended by giving her himself only a sort of half-vote. He is known to be one of the small number who proposed to the judges to divide the prize between *Adèle* and the *Conversations*.

The Duchess of Grammont said with her usual frankness that she was overjoyed at the success of Madame d'Epinay, because she hoped that Madame de Genlis would die with envy, which would be an excellent thing, or that she would revenge herself by a good satire, which would be good again; and lastly, because she wished all the world to perceive, what she had for some time suspected, the Academy to be falling into dotage.

The following circumstance is a scandal upon philosophy and the philosophers: M. l'Abbé de Mably has received the most glorious homage to which a man of letters can aspire. Messrs. Franklin and Adams desired in the name of the Congress of the United States of America, that he would draw up the digest of a constitution suited to the new republic. To judge from the style of his last work there is no reason to apprehend that this new Solon will render our good allies a very polished people. If we expect the Americans to submit blindly to his laws, it is doubtless profound policy on our part to have given them such a lawgiver; since, judging by the admirable views developed in his treatise on legislation, what may he be supposed likely to recommend to them?—that they should cultivate the

ground, should remain poor and be contented. Assuredly such are the ordinances that will best agree with the interests of France, and with the repose of all Europe.

Doubts on the different Opinions received in Society. Small duodecimo.

This litttle collection of detached thoughts is dedicated to the manes of M. Saurin. It is written by Mademoiselle de Sommery, an elderly lady, of distinction, who devotes her life to the study of men and letters, but who had published nothing up to this time. All who frequent the meetings of the French Academy are acquainted with her. She never fails to make her appearance there, and her face is very striking. She is a large woman, of a dark complexion, almost black, with very thick eye-brows, and with large eyes, full of fire and energy. Her book proves that she has imbibed much from the *Maxims of Rochefoucauld* and still more from the characters of La Bruyère; it contains, it is true, many common-place ideas, but they are for the most part expressed with delicacy, elegance, and precision. The article which appears to contain the greater number of new and appropriate observations, is that upon society. We cannot withhold a few specimens from the reader.

"That which is called *bon-ton*, is the *ton* of the great world. It is easier felt than defined. It consists in a noble facility of speech, a politeness of expression, a propriety of deportment, a nicety of

discernment, which pays to every person the respect due to his condition, and instructs us equally in what we owe to others, and to what we are entitled in return."

"However lightly we may esteem that which is called *bon-ton*, it cannot be dispensed with in any man or in any book."

"Should any one ask where perfection in manners may be found, I answer I know not the house which can completely realize the idea."

"To converse with a person of mean understanding is as difficult as to travel on foot with a lame man."

"Well intentioned people are generally so awkward, and so constantly unfortunate, that we often feel inclined to make trial of the bad intentioned."

"Many people have the reputation of being wicked, with whom we should be too happy to pass our lives."

"A man of wit is easily seduced; a fool cannot be seduced, he is subdued."

February, 1783.

The great Vestris, being informed of the immoderate expenses of his son, assembled his friends together, and in their presence, with all the emphasis and dignity natural to him, addressed the young man in the following words: "Augustus, the bad "state of your finances is talked of in the world. "It is reported that you have a standing account

" with all the milliners; that you abuse the confi-
" dence which the name I permit you to bear in-
" spires; if you do not immediately regulate your
" affairs, I will not suffer you to bear it any longer!
" we have always made an honourable figure in the
" world; hear me, Augustus, I will have no Gue-
" menés in my family.'

The Four Seasons, in the Climate of Paris; a Poem of a single verse.

Preliminary notes of the Author.

" With all due respect to Messrs. Thomson
" and St. Lambert, whose talents I much respect,
" I will venture to assert, that the part of Europe
" which we inhabit is never gladdened by a real
" spring.

" The charms of that season are known only
" in Asia Minor, in the Archipelago, and upon the
" shores of the Mediterranean: from the Greeks
" we have learned to sing the praises of spring;
" and the moist and freezing atmosphere which
" reigns over our heads, teaches us to do as well
" as we can without it.

" In the environs of Paris the song of the
" nightingale is unheard: her notes are hushed,
" and she shudders with fear and astonishment.
" How can she sing of love during nights of wind
" and tempest, which destroy the greater part of
" our fruits and vernal pleasures?

" Summer, beneath this zone, is but a tem-
" pest of fire and dust. Our boasted autumn is

" either dry or stormy, and will scarcely allow the " farmer to complete the harvest. With regard to " winter, I shall leave my readers to judge of the " truth of my poem.

" For the rest, should my work fail of pleasing " all the world, I dare at least flatter myself it will " prove wearisome to none."

First and last Canto.

" Rain and wind, and wind and rain."

This master-piece is by M. le Comte de la Touraille, gentleman to the Prince de Condé. He recited it to one of his friends who was very difficult to please. " At least you will not find it too long," said he. " Pardon me," replied his friend Severus, " it is too long by half. *Wind and rain* would have said all."

Never did any soap-bladder more seriously arrest the attention of a crowd of children, than the aerostatic globe of Messrs. Montgolfier has occupied for this month both the city and the court; in all our circles, at all our suppers, at the toilets of our belles, in our academical lyceums, we hear of nothing but experiments, atmospheric air, inflammable gas, flying cars, and aerial voyages. A book more mad than that of Cyrano de Bergerac, might be composed by simply collecting all the projects, all the chimeras, all the extravagancies for which we are indebted to this new discovery. Our coffee-house politicians already begin to calculate, with the most patriotic sympathy, the increased expenses

which the indispensable establishment of an aerial marine will impose upon the nation. Others smile at the happy idea that a department must be formed for it, where a certain minister, impatient to be in place and ready to accept any place offered, may be happily provided for. The only disquiet felt by M. Gudin de la Brenellerie, at the success of an invention no less calculated to enlarge the boundaries of the monarchy than that of human intellect, arises from the fear, that England our rival, may get possession of the secret, improve upon it before ourselves, and in a short time succeed to the empire of the air, as she has already usurped that of Neptune. Our philosophical poet would have been happy if, instead of insisting, in the late treaty of peace, on less important conditions, our negociators had sought rather to establish our titles and privileges, relative to an object whose consequences will one day extend far beyond the limits of our contracted atmosphere; but he felt the difficulty of discussing this point. The genius of M. Blanchard still discouraged by the hisses of last year, has suddenly revived at the sound of Messrs. Montgolfier's renown; in combining his own machine with the latter's newly discovered secret, he does not renounce the honour of being the first aerial navigator. We may shortly expect to have carriages of every description, some formed for rowing in the air, others for performing the voyage from planet to planet. It is already decided that for visits of ceremony, and the ordinary equipages of the court, nothing would be more

appropriate than to drive a pair of eagles in hand; the peacock, Juno's bird, would be consecrated to the service of our queen; and lest the doves of Venus should envy this distinction they might at times be harnessed, and partake the honour. Great attention will be paid to improving the breed of owls and vultures for the equipages of poor physicians and philosophers. Of these extravagancies, that which I most approve of is the idea of rising to a great height in the air, and by means of good glasses watching the moment, when by the rotation of the globe, the country we wish to traverse is presented to us, and then to descend gently, free of expense or danger; by these means the traveller might alight on China in the evening, and find himself at home on the morrow.

But it is time to return to the discovery of Messieurs Montgolfier, which is not the less interesting, for having given birth to idle speculations. What engaged them in this research, was the desire of inventing some engine for the siege of Gibraltar more effectual than floating batteries. This desire, vague as it was in itself, inspired by their natural industry, and by the interested motive of filling up their hours of leisure from their manufactory, encouraged them to persevere, and not to be dismayed by several ineffectual attempts. At length they succeeded in framing the machine, which I have the honour of announcing. An experiment of Boyle on the comparative weight of different kinds of air, inspired the first hint, and the trial

which I am going to describe, gave earnest of their success. It is the same case with a celebrated discovery as with an illustrious family, we are desirous of collecting the most trifling details of their origin.

A piece of silk which Messieurs Montgolfier had sent for from Lyons, merely to use as linings for their cloaths, appeared to them better devoted to physical experiments. By the assistance of some seams the silk soon takes the form, more or less exact, of a globe, or a sphere; they find a mode of introducing forty cubic feet of air; the balloon escapes from their hands and rises to the ceiling of the apartment. The joy of Archimedes at solving his famous problem, could not exceed that of our two natural philosophers; they hasten to catch their machine, and let it loose in the garden, where it rises beyond thirty feet. Having assured their first success by new experiments, they constructed the grand machine, which was elevated on June 5th, in the presence of the States of the Provinces; and this is the machine, of which a written account was first transmitted to the comptroller-general, by whom it has been communicated to the academy of sciences.

The globe was thirty-five feet in diameter; it was made of cloth cased in oiled paper. We have discovered, that they procured the gas with which it was filled by a very simple and cheap process, by burning moist straw, and different animal substances, as wool and other greasy materials, more or less inflammable. Under favour of this smoke

the globe, left to itself, rose out of sight to an elevation, calculated by some at 500 toises; by others at 1,000; it descended again ten minutes after, from the loss of gas which it enclosed. According to the calculation of Messieurs Montgolfier, the globe occupied the space of a volume of air of 2,156 pounds in weight; but as the gas only weighed 1,708, and the globe 500, an excess of 578 pounds remained for the impulse with which the globe tended to its elevation.

A little smoke then will perform the greatest wonders; and who could doubt it? there is every reason to believe that this secret has been suspected for a long time. Who has not heard of the smoke of vanity, of glory, of opinion? By smoke we raise a man above himself;—we make heroes, poets, great men in every department, by smoke alone. In natural as in moral philosophy every thing arises, and every thing returns to smoke: such is the constant and universal law of nature; but we refer this discussion to another time.

No person at Paris has felt a more lively interest in the discovery of Messieurs Montgolfier than M. Faujas-de-Saint Fond, author of an excellent natural history of the mountains of the Vivarais; he is the person who embraced with enthusiasm the idea of opening a subscription for repeating the experiment at Paris, and who proposed to commission Messieurs Charles and Robert to execute the plan. These gentlemen said at first, that forty or fifty louis would cover all the expenses of the experiment;

and we are so accustomed, in this country, to similar associations and expenses, that the munificence of the public was astonished at so small a sum requiring a delay of some days for its collection.

The subscription had hardly been decided on, before an open war broke out between those appointed to collect it, and the natural philosophers entrusted with the construction of the machine. It would be rather tedious to enter into the details of this illustrious dispute. One of the points most discussed, was, whether the globe was to be abandoned to its fate, or reserved for new experiments: the subscribers required it to be given up to its destiny; but this point they could only obtain by the promise of a larger compliment to M. Robert. For that however they esteemed themselves likely to be well rewarded in the pleasure they should have at the great astonishment which would one day be excited by the descent of their globe in the kingdom of Mogol, or Mexico;—nay, perhaps even among the philosophers of the moon or some other planet. These ridiculous disputes did not impede the construction of the machine, which was ingeniously framed of silk varnished with elastic gum which the Messrs. Robert had found the secret of dissolving. From ignorance of the process by which Messrs. Montgolfier filled their balloon, they employed an inflammable air produced by the solution of iron filings in vitriolic acid; and if this process were not more difficult, more tedious, and more expensive than the other, it would doubtless be pre-

ferable to it, because it furnishes a gas which is to the atmospheric air as 13 to 107; thus Messrs. Robert, Charles, and others, have mutually claimed for themselves every detail of the process, and by turns disputed the honour of the invention.

Without entangling ourselves with their discussions, it is sufficient to know that the aerostatic globe constructed by Messrs. Roberts rose majestically in the Champ de Mars, on the 27th of this month, precisely at five o'clock, before the eyes of all Paris. Public notice had been given of the day fixed for the experiment. Never did royal review attract a greater crowd of every class and condition. The globe was about twelve feet in diameter. The amount of its elevation has not yet been decided, the bad weather made such a calculation difficult; but from the smallness of its volume it must have been considerable; in a few minutes it was quite out of sight. Our wishes and our admiration would have wafted it to the extremities of the universe; it disappointed our expectation; instead of going to astonish distant shores by its august appearance, it modestly limited its travels to Gonesse, a village situated about four leagues from Paris, to the no small terror of the peasants who saw it descend in a field where they were at work.

It will not be surprising that, three days after, all Paris was inundated with engravings representing the departure and arrival of the globe.

Many persons who take a pride in remaining

cold in the midst of public enthusiasm have not failed to repeat: *but what end will be answered by these experiments? of what use is this discovery which makes so much noise?* The venerable Franklin answers them with his usual simplicity: *of what use is a new-born child?* It is true, that a child may die in the cradle, perhaps he may grow up weak in mind and body, but perhaps we may behold him some day become the glory of his country, the light of his age, the benefactor of humanity.

We are on the eve of losing Messrs. d'Alembert and Diderot; the first of a consumption attended with a complaint of the bladder, the second of a dropsy. It is very singular that two men who have together given a character to their age, who have erected together the edifice of a work which assures to them immortality, should again unite to descend into the grave together. The Marquis de Condorcet who pays to M. d'Alembert the duties which a father might expect of a son, is perpetual secretary of the Academy of Sciences, and at present Director of the French Academy; M. d'Alembert, on leaving to him the disposal of his effects, said to him with a smile notwithstanding his pain, *my friend, you will make my eulogy in the two academies; you have no time to lose in this double duty.*

We collect with an interest mingled with respect the last words of a dying philosopher; they become yet more precious when they lay before us

the tranquillity of his soul in his last moments. I thought it my duty to transcribe them.

The parliament of Paris had condemned the Comte de Lally Tolendal to lose his head, and his papers to be burned by the hand of the executioner. M. de Lally Tolendal the son undertook to retrieve his father's memory, from the stain, and with this view referred the sentence of the parliament of Paris to the revision of that of Dijon, which has confirmed the former sentence. The speech which he delivered on this occasion is written with uncommon eloquence such as is seldom to be found at the bar, and reflects the highest honour on the young officer. We will transcribe the exordium as a model of its kind.

" Gentlemen, if ever I have been in need of your indulgence, of the exertion of your virtues, your humanity, it is more particularly on this day that I invoke them to my assistance. Inspired by a religious fear on entering this sanctuary; by the majesty of the place; by the respect due to this august assembly: nay more, Gentlemen, overwhelmed since yesterday by a public * mourning, which more nearly affects myself, a thousand torments at once assail me. All my griefs are renewed, all my wounds are opened to bleed again; this instant recals another of agony and torture. Even now in imagination I behold my unhappy father, I be-

* The death of Madame Vogué.

hold him, Gentlemen advancing to that last interrogatory which was the forerunner of his long punishment; I see him robbed of the glorious badges of distinction purchased by his blood, indignant at the sight of that infamous tribunal which is reserved for his endurance, uncovering his head grown white with age, pointing out to his judges his breast covered with scars, and asking them, *if such should be the reward of fifty years of service?* . . . Ah! Gentlemen, should any error escape my lips, should zeal hurry me away, in the name of justice and of pity count not as a crime the wildness of grief and the transports of nature. Permit me to find a refuge in your better feelings, there I have a safeguard, there the sacred names whose rights I have to avenge, and whose duties I have to fulfil will not fail to find an echo. If the Judge be against me, then Gentlemen, let the son recal to mind his father, let the father think on his children, and you will pardon and pity, perhaps even you will cherish me. Justice has torn from me a father; I ask of her another; I see one in every magistrate who hears me. This thought mingles yet some sweetness in the bitterness that devours me: it gives me some little power, and I exclaim with arms extended toward each of you; "my father, support me in the defence of him whom nature gave me; the intention of nature and that of the law can never contradict each other."

The literary part of Europe has just sustained

a heavy loss in the death of M. d'Alembert; philosophy, the sciences and letters will long regret this celebrated man. We will at present confine ourselves to detailing a few of the circumstances attending his last moments, subjoining a sort of eulogy on him, spoken by the Marquis de Condorcet at a public sitting of the Academy of Sciences.

M. d'Alembert died, the 29th October, at the age of seventy, of a consumption, brought on from the pain occasioned by a stone in his bladder; it was of a considerable size, but not adherent. He would not consent to the operation of passing a sound, although it would have preserved his life; he feared even to be made acquainted with the cause of his sufferings, and he shuddered at the very thought of being cut for the stone. It appears almost unpardonable in the Coryphœus of philosophers to display so little fortitude, when a poor Archbishop* of eighty years of age offered him so noble an example: but this kind of disposition belongs less to the character of our ideas than of our sentiments; perhaps the mind of a geometrician views things too correctly to be endowed with courage. The acute pains which he was condemned to suffer were at once a source and an excuse for his impatience; and these sufferings, rather than the approach of death which he took no pains to dis-

* M. Christophe de Beaumont, who supported this operation in the eighty-first year of his age.

guise to himself, soured his character. He did not however fail a single day to receive the visits of his friends. The parish priest called on him the evening before his death, but was informed by his servant that he was too ill to be admitted on that day; a visit on the following day he said would be agreeable to his master. That very night put a period to his life and sufferings. There is reason to suppose that the philosophical geometrician had calculated from the state of debility in which he then was, that this interval would suffice to liberate him from the ceremony of exhortations which the priest conceived it his duty to administer, and which the temper of the patient rendered tiresome without advantage. M. d'Alembert was carried to the burial ground of his parish without pomp or noise. His friends strove in vain to obtain the archbishop's consent to his being buried in the church, a permission granted to every citizen in good circumstances, who is inclined to pay for so foolish a distinction; but this the archbishop constantly refused. He had however the good sense not to offer the insult, more prejudicial to religion than to philosophy, of refusing, as his predecessor did in the case of Voltaire, burial in holy ground, to a Catholic who had never embraced any other form of worship.

Perhaps the archbishop was influenced by certain sentiments of contrition at the moment of his death, to grant M. d'Alembert a corner in the burial ground; but he thought it necessary at the same time to refuse him a tomb in the church, on

account of the uniform publicity of his opinions, lest a favour so common might be considered as an act of dangerous toleration, and the stone or marble on which his name would be transmitted to posterity, might appear in some sort to consecrate his memory. Some persons of good sense have discovered much wisdom in his conduct; but in general this middle course has given equal dissatisfaction to the devout and to philosophers. It is rather unaccountable that these latter should have so much anxiety to go to church after their death, when they made it so much their glory never to go there during their life.

M. d'Alembert has left, and indeed must of necessity have left behind him but a small fortune; he enjoyed an annual pension of 14,000 livres. Had he desired more, it would have been cheerfully granted; but his wants were ever the measure of his ambition. He has named the Marquis de Condorcet as his legatee; he has bequeathed 6,000 livres to one of his servants, and 4,000 to the other. He charged his executor to give them more if the product of the inheritance will admit of greater liberality. It is suspected that the Marquis de Condorcet will be compelled to have recourse to his own purse, for the fulfilment of this article of the will, since the furniture, books, and papers of the testator are insufficient for these two legacies. He has appointed M. Remy his fellow collegian, and M. Watelet, to be the executors of his will; he leaves to them and some others of his friends legacies in

porcelaine, pictures, and engravings. It is singular that his testament should begin with this form of words: *In the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*; a form of words not absolutely required in such an act, and which on the part of a philosopher, has the appearance of misplaced pleasantry.

November 1783.

At a time when our tears yet flowed over the tomb of Madame d'Epinay, we did not venture to consecrate in these literary annals the remembrance to which she is so justly entitled. We should have feared to sadden our eulogies by our regrets; we should have feared lest the expression of a sensibility yet too much alive might have given to our praises an air of exaggeration, which would have rendered them suspected, at least by those who have only known her in her writings.

Louise-Florence-Pétronille Tardieu-Desclavelles, widow of M. Lalive d'Epinay, was the daughter of a man of rank, killed in the service of the King. The fortune which he left her was very moderate. It was intended to recompense the father's services, by marrying the daughter to one of the richest matches then known in the finance, conferring on her as a dowry the post of a farmer-general for her husband. She passed the first years of her life in the bosom of opulence, surrounded by all the illusions with which riches can intoxicate a young person, and at Paris, more

than elsewhere. This golden dream soon vanished from her eyes: the wild expenses and extreme frivolity of M. d'Epinay soon deranged this enormous fortune. His father, in order to save something from the general wreck, was compelled to substitute a part of his own property, and fearful lest his daughter-in-law might be the victim of her husband's extravagance, required that she should be separated from him; at the same time taking such precautions as assured to her an honourable income.

Her connection with Jean Jaques Rousseau began in the bright days of her youth and of her fortune. He was passionately enamoured of her, as he never failed to be of every woman who would condescend to admit him to her society. She loaded him with benefits, not only with all the delicacy of the most tender friendship, but with all the nicety of discernment which our original and almost savage philosopher appeared to require. At first he seemed deeply affected by this behaviour; but some time after, believing himself entitled to be jealous of his friend M. Grimm, he repaid his benefactress with the blackest ingratitude, and the man whom he believed preferred to himself appeared in his eyes the most unjust and perfidious of mortals. Impudently assaulting them with these odious calumnies, he did not hesitate to leave on her tomb the monument of an inconceivable hatred, or rather that of the most cruel and darkest of all outrages.

Young, rich, beautiful, full of grace and wit, now did Madame d'Epinay fail in that only perfection which could yield her the enjoyment of these advantages? Vain prejudices would perhaps affect to defend her memory from this weakness. A sentiment more equitable will not disown the remembrance of that which did equal honour to her heart and her understanding. But nothing conveys so high an idea of her merit, as the credit given to those reports with which envy and malignity had dared to asperse her youth. This is sufficient to inspire greater veneration for that strength of mind which, by its own efforts, enabled her so completely to repair the errors of a frivolous education, and for the uncommon virtues which raised her subsequently to that degree of esteem and consideration which she enjoyed in a more advanced age. True it is that one of the most prominent features in her character was a constancy, an energy of resolution, which rose superior to all the weaknesses of habit, above all the extravagancies of the most lively sensibility, and supplied new resources to that force and courage, which were almost exhausted by a long succession of vexation and sufferings.

For ten years has she been overwhelmed with a most painful malady, supporting life only by the assistance of opium, reduced almost to the point of death and reviving twenty times, without ceasing to avail herself of the intervals of suffering for discharging the duties imposed on her by maternal

tenderness and active friendship. Amidst the torments of a frail and painful existence, she has been seen conducting her own affairs and those of her children, rendering services to those who had the happiness to approach her, evincing a lively interest in all that was passing in the world in arts and in literature, engaging herself in the education of her grand-daughter as if it were the sole care of her life, writing one of the best works which have appeared for the use of infancy, working tapestry, writing songs, receiving her friends, corresponding with them, attending at the same time as scrupulously to her attire as her age and infirmities would admit. It might be said, that perceiving her end draw near she resolved daily to rob death of a part of his prey, and that the continual exertion of her intellectual powers kept alive the vital spark.

That which distinguished Madame d'Epinay was her profound good sense; she had little imagination. Less alive to elegance than to originality, her taste was not always sufficiently correct and delicate; but it would be difficult to find more penetration, a nicer discernment, more just conceptions, united to a conduct more firm and correct. Her conversation partook in some degree of the natural slowness and timidity of her ideas; she had even a kind of severe reserve, but not of a nature to stifle the interest and confidence which she uniformly inspired. Never did human being possess in greater perfection the art of eliciting from others, without art or indiscretion, what it was essential or desirable

to know. Nothing that was said in her presence was lost upon her, and she frequently availed herself of a random word to give that turn to the conversation which interested most.

Her sensibility was extreme, but interior and profound; from being habitually repressed, it seldom forced itself upon observation. In those pains and vexations which preyed visibly on her health, her disposition was ever calm and even. Above all prejudice, no one better knew the respect which a female ought to pay to public opinion, however unworthy it might seem of attention. She evinced the complaisance and consideration of an ordinary woman, for old usages and modern fashions. Although frequently ill, and confined to her apartment, she was not the less assiduous at her toilet; she had not the smallest grain of false prudery; but, forcibly impressed with the danger sometimes attending the most trifling impressions, she thought the first habitudes of a young person could not be guided by a circumspection too austere; perhaps this principle was even carried a little too far.

I subjoin a few features of a portrait which she sketched of herself in 1756; she had then attained her thirtieth year. "I am not handsome, but surely cannot be called plain. (She had very fine eyes and her hair growing well round her face imparted great interest to her physiognomy.) I am small, thin, but very well formed. I have a juvenile air, noble, soft, lively, playful and engaging. My imagination is tranquil, my mind slow, dis-

cerning, reflective, but unconnected. My soul combines vivacity, courage, firmness, elevation, and an excessive timidity. I am true without being frank. I am endowed with discernment in the pursuit of my object, but have none in penetrating the projects of others. I am naturally tender and full of sensibility, constant and without the least mixture of coquetry. The facility with which I have been observed to form and to break off intimacies, a conduct frequently imposed on me by prudence and honour, has made me suspected of levity and caprice. Until this year I have never become well acquainted with myself. My self-love, without inspiring the wild idea that I am perfectly discreet, permits me to hope that I have some claim to the character of a woman of great merit."

Never was hope better founded, never was pretension more fully justified. * She has left no other manuscripts than a continuation of the *Conversations of Emilia*, a * number of letters, and the outline of a long romance. The two little volumes, the one entitled, *Letters to my Son*, with this motto, *Facundum faciebat amor*; the other, *My Happy Moments; Solicitæ jucunda oblivia vitiæ*, although printed have never been published, and do not appear intended for publication; they contain however many estimable thoughts, much grace and sensibility. But as works intended merely for pri-

* She corresponded with all the most celebrated men of the age, Voltaire, Buffon, d'Alembert, Diderot, Richardson, the Abbé Galiani.

vate circulation, they are only to be considered in the light of essays from a pen which had not yet attained all its power of maturity.

We should afflict the shade of this most respectable of women, if we could pass over in silence the benefits with which a mighty sovereign condescended to honour her during the latter days of her life. Although M. Necker esteemed her highly, yet the extreme severity of his principles did not permit him to spare her in the reforms which he made on renewing the lease of the public farm, and these reforms absorbed almost entirely the net receipts of her income. Some compensation was due to her for this loss, and it was not refused; but from a flaw in the grant which was not sufficiently secured at the time of this minister's retirement from office, she found herself in great embarrassment. Her Majesty the Empress of Russia, informed of her distresses, was anxious to relieve them. Her bounty was extended to this illustrious individual with a truly imperial munificence, and accompanied with so much grace and interest, that the smallest favour thus bestowed would have appeared inestimable. On this occasion it was, that she sent to the young Countess de Belzunce, granddaughter of Madame d'Epinay, that medallion set in diamonds and enriched with her cypher, of which I have before spoken. Oh! who ever carried further than Catherine II. the great art of kings, that of receiving and of giving? As an example of the first we need only appeal to the counsel of

Abdoul-Hamet; for the second, to the gratitude of every man in Europe worthy of interesting her benevolence.

Her Majesty had honoured the *Conversations of Emilia* with the most flattering of all distinctions, long before it obtained the prize of the academy.

It is not my design to attempt an eulogy of M. d'Alembert; I leave that task to pens more able than my own. As that philosopher is indebted for his greatest reputation to geometry, none but geometricians can do him the justice to which his merits have a claim. I have often heard men whose talents entitled them to direct the public opinion on this subject, declare, that M. d'Alembert had attained the highest eminence in calculation, that he had made additions to the discoveries of the Eulers, the Bernouillis, and the Newtons, and even if his works contained nothing new, the clear and luminous method in which his deductions were given would of itself entitle them to a distinguished place among the works which have conferred on this age the claim of pre-eminence in science. Those who are unable to form an opinion for themselves, are at least disposed to believe in their merit after having reflected on the excellent preface to the Encyclopædia, a work, which embracing to the utmost extent ideas the most sublime, supposes a mind the most luminous, and will be regarded without doubt in all ages, as one of the finest monu-

ments which the genius of philosophy has erected to the glory of human knowledge.

In some of his other writings, for instance in his eulogies and his miscellanies of philosophy and literature, M. d'Alembert seems to fall below the renown which placed him at a very early age amongst the greatest geometricians of Europe. We find too much familiarity in the style of his miscellaneous histories; in his translations reigns a very superficial erudition, with a manner of writing elaborate, and sometimes pedantic. In general, in the greater part of his philosophical and moral essays, and above all, in his eulogies, an extreme inequality of style is to be observed, disproportions unworthy of a great writer, pride, absurdity, and the quackery belonging to the head of a party, with a tiresome affectation of running after a conceit, or any other pleasantry, even were it as low as a pun. His style almost always dry and cold, had little to recommend it but elegance, precision, and clearness. He was equally void of soul and of imagination; but in expressing the boldest truths, one is forced to admire an art which he possesses to the greatest degree, the art of writing with habitual circumspection.

But it would be unjust to appreciate the talents of M. d'Alembert as a writer, excepting in that class of works to which he had more expressly devoted all the resources and all the application of his genius; his other works should merely be considered as recreations, and the pastime of his leisure hours,

A man undoubtedly very superior in that branch of science where his success could not be appreciated by many, and where few could judge of his merit, he attached too much value to the applauses of a frivolous multitude, who lavish them with equal reason on the academical benches, and the temporary stage of a fair or of the Boulevards. He perhaps purchases this species of popularity by complaisance unworthy the dignity of a sage, far distant at least from the pure taste whose empire philosophy pretends to have fixed on a basis not to be shaken.

On perceiving in the smaller works of M. d'Alembert only the essays of a man who after fathoming the depths of science, still pleases himself with touching upon the more entertaining subjects of common philosophy and lighter literature, we feel that he merits greater indulgence than his enemies are willing to grant him. Master of one science, should we not be grateful to him for descending to lighter studies? If considered in this light, there are few of his writings, even those the least adapted to justify his renown, where we may not discover an extreme discernment, features of a pleasing erudition, observations really instructive, and frequently even original grace. No one of his eulogies is a work of great taste, but many of them are excellent specimens of literature. The eulogy of Montesquieu is a master-piece of analysis, that of Bossuet is of a higher style than the others. We can almost discern in it some

traces of eloquence. In those of Fenelon and *Le Maître de Sacy*, are many traits of a sensibility gentle and affecting. We cannot help being convinced after reading them, that this philosophical heart was not always insensible, or we must suspect that his friend Mademoiselle de l'Espinasse had the gift of working miracles; for it is clear that we owe to his attachment for her the interesting picture of the intimacy of M. de Sacy and the Marchioness de Lambert—But we know enough of the illustrious academician both as a philosopher and a writer. Some account of his person, and of the habits of his private life, which are less known, will be more acceptable here.

We have seen no portrait of M. d'Alembert that much resembled him, nor could a likeness of him easily have been taken. The form of his features was of an ordinary cast, and his physiognomy bore no decided character. A *Lavater* would have discerned in the lines of his forehead, in the restless motion of his eyebrows, in the lower part of a nose, at the same time large and pointed, many traces of a strongly marked expression. He had small eyes, but a quick glance, a large mouth, but his smile possessed delicacy, satire, and majesty. The whole contour of his countenance impressed the idea of a penetrating mind, and of a disposition less prone to sadness than to irascibility. His stature was small and weakly; the sound of his voice was so shrill and piercing, that nature was suspected of having saved him the trouble of mak-

ing that cruel sacrifice to philosophy which Origen thought due to it. All Paris was acquainted with the answer of a man of the world whom his mistress wished to make jealous of d'Alembert. This lady concluded her exaggerated panegyric of his good qualities by saying to her cold admirer, *Yes, he is a God!—Ah! madam,* was the answer, *if he were a God, he would begin by making himself a man!* His exterior was simple to the greatest degree; he was almost always dressed like Jean-Jaques from head to foot in one colour; but on days of ceremony and in full Academy he affected to dress like all the world, with a bag, and solitaire à la Soubise. In some places, it is true, where he suspected himself to be less known, he would make no hesitation to distinguish himself by a particular dress, which served him as a philosopher's cloak, a cloak not always protected from ridicule, but not without value, and whose covering is at times very convenient.

Those who were most intimately acquainted with M. d'Alembert, describe him to have been good without kindness, full of sensibility without feeling, vain without pride, discontented without suffering; and they explain these strange contradictions by that mixture of apathy, of weakness, and of activity which so essentially characterised his mind and his habits. He was equitable, humane, beneficent, but felt no pleasure in those virtues. He was accused of passionately affecting the glory of passing for the leader of the Encyclopædists, and

of committing for the interests of this glory more than one injustice, more than one act of literary duplicity. It would be tedious to discuss this charge: but we cannot deny that the passions inspired by party spirit were those of which he might most reasonably be suspected, for none are more suitable to cold and calculating minds; but we may rest assured, that if he did many good actions without goodness, he did many actions, of which his pretended victims complained, without any kind of malice. At all events, we cannot deny his memory the honour of having contributed much to the consideration which literary men have long enjoyed, of having obtained the greatest influence in the two academies of which he was a member, of having preserved it, if I may so say, to the end of his days, and of being in some degree the visible head of that *illustrious* church of which Voltaire was the founder and the guardian. If the last days of his reign had not all the lustre of his dawn, we should perhaps attribute it far less to the depressure of genius under the weight of infirmities, than to the decline of the empire itself under which he was the first administrator, a decline which the most expert policy could neither dissemble nor avert.

But an impartial observer must have remarked that this philosophical dominion, of which he was so jealous, was never universally admitted; that in the opinion of many he had rather usurped than conquered it; that in the eyes of the greater number the superiority of his literary titles contributed

less to maintain him there than the subtlety of his intrigues and his policy. Nor is this all: that policy, adroit as it appeared, was often foiled; it was even remarked to miscarry frequently after the death of Mademoiselle de l'Espinasse, whose acuteness and taste were of infinite service to the great and the little ambition of her friend. After losing part of his credit, he wished at least to keep up the appearances of it, by laying hold of the favourable moment to appear at the head of the party or the opinion whose triumph he foresaw. The last attempt of his authority was the election of the Marquis de Condorcet; the intrigue which effected this election, would have done honour to any conclave.

The society of M. d'Alembert was for many years the most brilliant that could be collected; it was infinitely more miscellaneous, and for that reason infinitely less agreeable, after the loss of his female friend. His private conversation afforded all that could instruct and recreate the mind. He conformed with as much facility as complaisance to the subject which pleased the many; he carried to it good humour and simplicity, with an almost inexhaustible fund of ideas, of anecdotes, and curious stories, with which his memory was stored: hardly could a subject be found, however dry or frivolous, which he had not the secret of converting to a source of entertainment. He spoke well, narrated with much precision, and displayed the ridiculous with a grace and readiness peculiarly

his own. All his sarcastic sayings have a rare and profound originality of character. *Who is happy? Some miserable man,* was his answer, an answer which would have done credit to Diogenes. The same sentiment led him often to say, that *the only unalloyed happiness of life was to satisfy copiously every morning the most gross of our necessities,* that want which made Alexander remember that he was not a god; and *that a hypochondriac state was the most deplorable condition, because it presented to us things as they are.* He had only attained to his twenty-first year when he presented himself for election to the Academy of Sciences. His opponent was one Mapen, a poor geometrician, but protected for a long time afterwards by Fontenelle. Fontenelle told d'Alembert, "When any one presents himself for election into the Academy, we make up a reason composed of age and of merit." "*That,*" said d'Alembert, "*is very right, provided the reason is composed of the direct of the merit, and inverse of the age.*"

If it be true that nature left the fair sex but few claims to the affections of our philosopher, it is yet more true that he was not the less obedient to their empire; he was the most amorous of slaves, and the most slavish of all the amorous. His reputation was already very brilliant,* (but this was

* M. d'Alembert belonged to all the academies of Europe, when he enjoyed but from 12 to 1500 livres per annum. He was hardly richer when he refused an income of 100,000 livres, offered by the Empress of Russia, to engage him in the education of his Imperial Highness.

at that time almost the only fund which he had for his subsistence), when a woman, no less coquettish than frivolous, took it into her head to make a conquest of his heart. She gained such entire possession of it, that he soon neglected his studies and his affairs, and perhaps she would have utterly ruined him, if Madame Geoffrin, apprised of it, had not taken upon her to interfere in this little intrigue, with all the address and firmness of character which true friendship could inspire. She went to see the lady in question, although totally unconnected with her, represented to her the irreparable injury which she was doing her friend and herself, without any advantage; got into her possession all the letters which she had received from him, and obtained a promise from her never to see him again. Nothing can be compared with the ascendency which Mademoiselle de l'Espinasse had gained over all his thoughts and actions. Although he revolted sometimes against a tyranny so cruel, he did not support its yoke with less devotion and submission. It would be difficult to find in all Paris a miserable Savoyard, who runs on so many errands in the day, as the first geometrician of Europe, the chief of the sect of the Encyclopædia, the dictator of our academies, the philosopher who had the glory of refusing to instruct the heir of the most vast empire in the world, was compelled to perform in the service of Mademoiselle de l'Espinasse. Nor is this all that she had the effrontery to require of him. Reduced to be the confident of the tender passion

which she had conceived for M. de Mora, a young Spaniard, he was charged with all the arrangements that could favour the intrigue; and when his happy rival had left France, he was forced to await at the general post-office the arrival of the courier, to assure to the young lady the pleasure of receiving her letters a quarter of an hour sooner than the regular time.

These anecdotes rather redound to the glory of one sex than humiliate the philosophy of the other; they only prove what little influence our systems have by whatever name we may call them, upon our character and natural affections. The same disposition which subjected our philosopher to the caprices of his female friend, prompted him to say in the terror which his sufferings and the approach of death inspired, *Happy are they who are possessed of courage; for my own part I have it not!* There is a simplicity in this confession far preferable to the ostentation of a sentiment which is hardly to be found in the heart of man, which is in fact more rarely to be found than we are inclined to allow.

Let us conclude this article by some anecdotes calculated undoubtedly to obtain for M. d'Alembert the esteem of all hearts of sensibility and well governed minds.

It is known that his first name was Jean de Rond. The natural son of M. Destouches and of Madame the Canoness de Tencin, he was abandoned and exposed on the steps of the church of St. Jean

de Rond, and from thence carried to the Foundling Hospital. His father took him from this house, and put him out to nurse with a woman named Rousseau, a glazier's wife, *rue Michel-le-Comte*, who suckled and brought him up with great difficulty on account of the extreme weakness of his constitution. He was even so puny that she refused at first to take the charge upon her. He lived at the house of this good woman until after his return from Berlin. A short time after his departure for Prussia, his mother desired to see him. He complied reluctantly with this invitation, and would not pay the visit without the company of his nurse. The interview was very cold on the part of M. d'Alembert. Madame de Tencin said to him, disconcerted by his manner; *But I am your mother!—You my mother!—No, there she is; I own no other!*—and then he threw himself on Madame Rousseau, embraced and wept over her.

At his return from Berlin where the King fatigued him beyond measure with his journeys and marches, he resumed his residence in his accustomed house. His lodging was very small, deprived of air, and unhealthy. He there fell very ill, and owed his recovery only to M. Bouvard. At length the expostulations of this physician determined him to leave the house of his nurse, and choose a more salubrious situation. At the death of the glazier Rousseau, his grandchildren put a seal upon all his effects, and inhumanly strove to keep his widow out of the succession. M. d'Alembert in-

formed of these infamous proceedings called on his nurse, and said to her, *Let these unworthy children carry all away, I will never forsake you.* He religiously kept his word until the death of that good woman, which took place some years ago.

On Monday, January 12, was performed for the first time, the tragedy of Macbeth, by M. Ducis.

This is the fourth play of Shakespeare which M. Ducis has endeavoured to transplant to the French stage; but no consideration less than that attached to his personal qualities and the success of his last works, *Œdipus* and *King Lear*, could possibly have protected this piece from failing at its first performance. The two first acts were favourably received; the third, in which the remorse of Macbeth begins, was in general received with a severe silence, interrupted only occasionally by the applauses bestowed on the energy with which M. Ducis has treated a situation so terrible. But this remorse which almost entirely engrosses the fourth and fifth acts, appeared as tiresome by its duration as atrocious and revolting from the very colours which the author has employed to heighten the distress. The symptoms of disapproval, which benevolence and the esteem deserved by M. Ducis on many considerations, reduced to simple threats, suggested to him many retrenchments and considerable corrections; he has had the courage and unexampled docility to obey these impressions. This de-

ference to public taste joined to certain happy alterations which give an additional motive for the action, and accelerate its progress, conferred on him, at the second representation a success by so much the more flattering as the public appeared to enjoy the triumph which it decreed, and to take pleasure in consoling him for the severity with which many passages of the work had been received at its first representation.

M. Ducis has never departed from his original but for the purpose of adapting a subject, at once whimsical and terrible, to the existing laws of our theatre; but in submitting to rules so simple, and so hard to follow, of which the Greeks have left us the example and the model, M. Ducis was compelled to accumulate in the space of twenty-four hours, a crowd of events which tread on each other, and lose all appearance of probability. Hence the drama does not excite the interest of its English prototype, because the French poet, by adhering to the unities imposed on him by our school, has not allowed himself time to prepare the incidents and to develop the characters with that natural negligence and truth which form the chief merit of the monstrous master-pieces of Shakespeare.

At the period when the English Æschylus, without a model, and by the mere resources of his genius, created tragedy among a people whose diversions were principally cock-fighting, or bruising, he was compelled to select, for the amuse-

ment of a nation, whom their manners and the climate which modifies them render difficult to be moved, subjects gloomy and terrible, atrocious crimes, and wonderful events which overwhelm the mind, and would degrade human nature were they not uncommon. His spectators who had no conception of the rules by which, in every art, genius succeeds in representing under agreeable forms an object the most deformed in itself, in choosing, collecting and happily arranging its conceptions to form a perfect whole, whose parts united by easy and natural connections form those eternal beauties which are of all nations; his spectators, I say, would have despised dramatic works conceived and treated conformably with the principles and rules which regulated the Corneilles, the Racines, and the Voltaires. They required pictures taken from nature, but from a rude and savage nature, conformable to their own character and manners; romantic events, eccentric situations, atrocious and almost monstrous characters, because terror is the sensation most predominant over a gloomy and melancholy people who have been nursed in revolutions. Traditions anterior to the written history of England, that of the troubles with which his country was so long agitated, and some epochs of Roman history, have furnished Shakespeare with the greater number of his tragic subjects. His plots are all irregular, but without confusion or improbability. Macbeth is history set in motion. Shakespeare has represented on the stage those

events, taken from the ancient chronicles of Scotland, in the order and space of time in which they really occurred; his play comprises the history of many years.

M. Ducis, on the contrary, in order to make this subject subservient to the unities of time and place, is obliged to renounce many of the beauties, which belong even to the faults of his model. He has avoided some of these defects; but he has fallen into those, which necessarily appertain to a plot unseasonably hurried, and to an action which cannot be developed but by a long chain of extraordinary events. He appears to think, that the remorse and despair of a great crime must be united with other interest in order to fix the attention of the spectator. He supposes Malcolm, the son of Duncan, to be brought up by Seyward, a Scottish highlander, to whose care this king consigns him, to save him from assassination, and in this manner fixes all the secret springs of his piece upon this inheritor of the throne, who passes for the son of Seyward himself. But this fiction, which ought to relieve and vary the interest of an action continually dreadful, has only furnished M. Ducis with the fine accessary part of Seyward. Malcolm, who in the first act is announced and introduced in an interesting manner, appears in the third only to inform us, that he is the son of Duncan; that his father was assassinated by Macbeth; and in the fifth, to serve as the pantomime to the denouement. It is to be regretted that M. Ducis has

taken so little advantage of this character, which might have been made the soul of the action. In other respects, he has supplied the interest, which nothing can perfectly replace, by the profound, pathetic, and often sublime and agonizing energy with which he has treated the whole character of Macbeth. The exposition begun by Frédégonde,* and completed by Seyward, the recital of the combat of Macbeth, his arrival, the development of his ambition, this same ambition, which is at war with remorse, his remorse destroyed by the counsels of Frédégonde, and the truly dramatic action in which he flies to the succour of Duncan, at the same instant that he enters his chamber to stab him, have received from the public just applause. But from the third act the action offers nothing but the remorse of Macbeth, and this remorse, though often eloquent, wearies and fatigues; because this sentiment, although M. Ducis has presented it under every shade and colour, is, in its own nature, always declamatory, and nearly allied to exaggeration; because an assassin, pursued during three acts by the horror of his crime, and by despair almost brought to delirium, is a character which dejects the soul, instead of interesting it. *Herod*, in the *Marianne* of Voltaire; *Orestes*, in the *Andromache* of Racine; and in Voltaire's *Electra*, present the sublime and frightful pictures of the despair, which accompanies great crimes with the rapidity and burst of thunder. These

* Frédégonde, a name substituted for Lady Macbeth.

great masters knew how to prolong such terrible images without destroying their effects; and in all arts, but above all in the dramatic art, oppositions, contrasts, and light and shade thrown alternately on the action and on the character, give them that life and motion on which all the illusion, all the charm, and all the interest of which the drama is susceptible, depend.

The success which has crowned the new tragedy of M. Ducis, is the success of consideration for the conquest of great difficulties inherent in the subject; but yet more of the profoundly tragic talent, which he has displayed in some of the principal scenes.

Supplement to the Manner of writing History. 1 vol. 12mo.

M. Gudin de la Brenellerie, author of this work, written for the purpose of answering the Abbé de Mably, relates the following anecdote, of which we do not wish to deprive our readers, because it is perfectly well attested, and will throw some light on the motive which induced the Abbé to treat Mr. Gibbon so unhandsomely in his *Manner of writing History*. A critic relates the story to the young Theodore.

"You were at the house of M. de Fonce-
"magne, on the day when the Abbé de Mably
"and Mr. Gibbon dined there in state. The con-
"versation turned almost entirely on history. The

" Abbé de Mably, a great politician, before the " dessert was served, turned it to the government of " states; and as from the habit of admiring Livy, " he sets no value on any but the republican form " of government, he began to extol the excellence " of republics, from a firm persuasion that the " learned Englishman would approve every syllable, " and would admire the profoundness of genius " which made a Frenchman the advocate of a " free government. But Mr. Gibbon, instructed " by experience of the inconveniences resulting " from a popular government, differed from him " in opinion, and generously took upon him to " defend the monarchical form; the Abbé wished " to convince him by Livy, and by some argu- " ments selected from Plutarch, in favour of the " Spartans. Mr. Gibbon, endowed with the hap- " piest memory, and able to assemble all the facts " together in his thought, soon took the ascendency " in the conversation. The Abbé was heated, irri- " tated, and at last insolent; the Englishman, " preserving the natural phlegm of his country, " took his advantage, and pressed the Abbé more " and more in proportion as anger threw him off " his guard. The conversation became warm, and " M. de Foncemagne broke it off, by rising from " table and retiring to the drawing-room, where " no one was desirous to renew it."

Interesting Documents, very little known, to elucidate History and Literature; by M. de la

Place. Vol 2. The first volume appeared two years ago.

This volume contains some curious matter. Among the memorials produced at the trial of Mary Stuart, the letters of this unfortunate Queen to Bothwell are here brought to light. These are the monuments of unbridled passion, and leave no doubt on the mind of the part which Mary took in the assassination of a husband, from whom she had in vain endeavoured to disengage herself by poison. All historians have remarked that the husband of the Queen was the finest man of the day; that Bothwell, on the contrary, to the most ordinary figure joined the worst morals. M. de la Place adds coarsely, that "*he was probably possessed of qualities and of talents made to please the ladies of that age.*"

There is much minute matter in the *continuation of the Memorial of M. Duclos,* and among these details, some popular rumours adopted with an incredible levity.

The most interesting parts in the continuation of this *Memorial,* are some anecdotes on the election of the Emperor Charles VII, on the true motives for the war which broke out in consequence; several fragments of letters on this subject to Cardinal Fleury by the King, the Queen, and Infanta of Spain. It would be impossible to conceive any thing more anxious and more tender than the solicitations which the two princesses employed with his aged Eminence, to make him enter on a war

which his interests and character rendered equally impolitic.

The anecdote of Anne Oldfield, a celebrated actress on the London stage, who in her last moments was so entirely engrossed with the dress in which she should be arrayed after her death, puts us in mind of a similar anecdote of the same kind, related of the Princess de Charolais. Although in the agonies of death, it was easier to bring her to receive the last sacraments than to take off her rouge: no longer able to resist the intreaties of her confessor, she at length consented—"but in this case," said she to the women who surrounded her, "*give me some other ribbands; you know that without rouge yellow ribbands look frightful upon me,*"—"*One would not look a-fright after one's death,*" were the last words of Anne Oldfield.

Cecilia, or Memoirs of an Heiress; by the Author of Evelina. Translated from the English. Five vols. 12mo.

This is one of the best novels which has for a long time appeared in England; the pathos of situations, the interest and variety of characters, of which the greater number are strongly marked and all well sustained, render this book as interesting as it is instructive; although the progress of the plot is rather slow, the winding up a little romantic, and many of the details too circumstantial, the work supposes at once an intimate knowledge of the human heart, and a most fruitful and sensible

imagination. If, as we have been assured, it is from the pen of a young author, it is a real prodigy. I know not to whom we are indebted for the translation, but its extreme negligence of style announces it to have been written in a hurry, and this is an unpardonable injury to the original. The author of Cecilia deserves to speak our language with more grace and purity.

April 1784.

At length, on Tuesday the 27th, *la Folle Journée*, or the *Marriage of Figaro*, that celebrated comedy of Beaumarchais, was represented at the French theatre; that comedy bandied about by censure for two years, stopped at the moment when the actors were preparing themselves to distribute the parts, rehearsed afterwards to be performed only on the theatre of the *Menus Plaisirs*, prohibited at the very instant of its representation, in the most public manner, and with all the forms which the power of the throne employs generally only on affairs whose importance entitles them to the especial notice of the state.

When we had the honour of mentioning the representation of this piece at the house of *M. de Vaudreuil* at *Genevilliers*, we had the honour of announcing, at the same time, that the success of the performance would not long remain lost for the capital. Yet were we well informed that the majority of the spectators at Genevilliers pronounced the piece to be ex-

tremely immoral, and absolutely inadmissible on a public theatre: but we had calculated the power and resources of the genius of M. Caron de Beaumarchais; we well knew that he was far less fearful of the ill which might be spoken of his work, than of the absolute oblivion to which the royal order appeared to condemn it; the representation at Genevilliers had drawn it forth from this oblivion, and the author of the *Marriage of Figaro* desired no more. His address, a fecundity of ways and means all subservient to the occasion, the character of the persons and circumstances, a tenacity of effrontery without example, all were an earnest to us that his resources and unyielding obstinacy would rise more than in proportion to the obstacles and difficulties which the government would oppose; that so many obstacles had only the effect of spurring his self-conceit to action. For M. Beaumarchais had said of himself, with far more reason than the generality of dramatic writers, "*all Europe has its eyes open upon my Marriage and upon myself; my honour demands that it should be played; it shall be played.*" Indeed the event justifies the opinion which he entertained of his resources, an opinion which we have never ceased to partake, with all the respect which the profundity and sublimity of his resources inspire.

The historical details of the intrigues to which he must have had recourse to obtain permission to represent his piece, the selection and variety of secret springs which he set in motion to gain his

point, in some manner both over the authority of government and that of public opinion, would no doubt furnish a course of negociation curious and entertaining enough; but he alone knows all that he had to do, and all that he has done, to ensure the success of this mighty enterprise. We know only that M. the Privy-Seal and the Lieutenant-General of Police have uniformly opposed the representation of the *Mariage de Figaro*; that M. le Baron de Breteuil, who was himself originally prejudiced against the work, has withdrawn the order of the King, by which it had been so solemnly proscribed; that before he interested himself in it, this minister desired to attend a reading, at which four or five men of letters assisted, such as Messrs. Gaillard, Champfort, Rhulière, &c. That the Sieur de Beaumarchais, who at this reading began by announcing that he submitted without reserve to all the retrenchments, to all the corrections of which these gentlemen should find his work susceptible, finished by defending the minutest details with an address, a force of logic, a seducing pleasantry, and a reasoning which have closed the lips of his censors, and preserved the *Marriage of Figaro*, with the exception of some words, precisely as it had been rehearsed at the theatre of the *Menus Plaisirs*. They even say that, at this meeting, what fell from M. Beaumarchais as an apology for his work, was infinitely superior in point of wit, originality, and the true comic vein, to the most ingenious and gay parts of his comedy.

Certainly no piece ever attracted such a concourse of spectators to the French theatre; all Paris would see this famous *Marriage*, and the room was crouded almost at the moment when the doors were thrown open to the public; hardly could the multitude who were at the doors from eight o'clock in the morning succeed in finding a place; the greater number entered by force, and threw their money to the door-keepers. Never was courtier by turns more venturous and supple in soliciting a favour at court, than were all our young nobles to secure themselves places at the representation of Figaro; more than one Duchess considered herself but too happy to find, in the balconies, where women of condition seldom sit, a miserable low stool by the side of Mesdames Duthé, Caline and Company.

The Marriage of Figaro has had, from its first representation, a prodigious success. This success, which will last for a considerable time, is owing principally to the conception of the work, which is as wild as it is new and original. It is a confusion whose clue, easy at first to be discovered, leads on to a crowd of situations equally pleasant and unforeseen, binds tighter as it advances the knot of the intrigue, and draws to a conclusion at once clear, ingenious, comic, and natural; a merit by no means of easy attainment in a piece the progress of which is so strangely complex. At every instant the action appears drawing to an end, at every instant it is renewed by words almost insignificant,

but which have the effect of preparing, without effort, new scenes, and replacing all the actors in a situation as lively and as interesting as those which preceded it. By this conduct entirely unknown on the French stage, and of which the Italian and Spanish theatres offer but few good models, the author has succeeded in attaching and amusing the spectators, during the three hours and a half consumed by the representation.

As for the immorality against which the decency and gravity of our manners have so inveighed, we must allow that the work in general is by no means the most austere, it is the picture of real manners, that of the manners and principles of the best society; and this picture is finished with a boldness, an undisguised freedom which might be dispensed with on the stage, if the object of a comic writer were to correct the vices and absurdities of the age, instead of pourtraying them for our amusement.

M. de Beaumarchais, when he offered to us the intriguing and shameless character of his clever and artful Figaro; a Count Almaviva disgusted with his wife, seducing her chambermaid, engaged in the pursuit of his gardener's daughter; a page beautiful and young as love himself, enamoured of the Countess and burning with desire for all the women he encounters; a Countess Almaviva more tender, more full of sensibility than our usages allow women to appear, and more particularly married women, on the theatres; by collect-

ing together, I say, all these characters corrupted, or ready to become so, by surrounding them with a crowd of fools or knaves, M. Beaumarchais certainly did not pretend to make a piece essentially moral; but do we not find in many comedies of Regnard, of Le Sage, of Daucourt, in some even of Molière, situations more free, and details more licentious?- Is there a scene on the theatre more daring than that where Tartuffe returns to the wife of Orgon, and pushes her against the table where the husband is concealed? It is true, the close of this scene and the moral lesson which results from it, justify the licence; again it is not prolonged with so much complacency and pleasure as that in the fifth act of the Marriage of *Figaro*, where the charming little Cherubin, whom they wish to dress in woman's cloaths, remains so long at the feet of the Countess, amorously rivetting her eyes which she fixes on him with the most interesting languor, and permits Suzon to unclasp his shirt-collar, and tuck up his sleeve to the elbow, which gives her an opportunity to say to the Countess, *See, madam, how white and smooth his arm is, it is really more white than mine.* The scene of the fifth act, where the Count coming to the rendezvous which Suzon gives him, finds his wife in her place, does not recognize her, and engages her to enter with him into a green-house where there is no light, is yet more gay than all the preceding. *No matter,* says he, *we have nothing to read.* At the representation, however, the Count does not follow the pretended

Suzon into the green-house, he conceals himself among the shrubs which skirt the stage; this precaution almost entirely guards against all the freedom that the situation might offer to the spectators, who do not permit a rendezvous even between husband and wife to end by their disappearing together and leaving the imagination to finish the picture which the side scene is supposed to hide from us.

But the prohibitions so frequently repeated against this comedy were not caused by these situations, daring as they may seem. Besides this the author has taken the liberty of indulging in sarcasms against all those with whom he has ever had a dispute; he has put into the mouth of Figaro the greater part of the events which have made his existence so famous; he treats the nobility with a freedom of which we have to this day had no example; he is not more indulgent to their morals, than to their ignorance and their meanness; he has the effrontery of speaking with ridicule of ministers, the Bastille, the liberty of the press, of the police, and even of the censors. He feels peculiarly honoured by the notice of the latter, and evinces to them many marks of gratitude in a more than usual strain of irony. This it is which M. de Beaumarchais has succeeded in attempting.

If the government has had the good sense to permit the performance of this piece, without the suppression of certain gaieties, which in the end can by no means be very dangerous; if M. le Baron de

Breteuil believes, as Figaro expresses it, that none but little men dread little writings, the public has not been equally indulgent to this inconceivable medley of wit, of delicate and just remark debased with passages of the very worst style and taste. Through all the laughter and applause which the new and comic situations of the piece excited, the pit seized with a precision, a quickness, and a feeling truly admirable, the majority of those parts which had been condemned before hand by men of taste at the numerous readings which the author had made of his piece. M. de Beaumarchais has yielded to the violence with which the suppression of many passages was demanded.

That the glory of M. de Beaumarchais might be complete, he has been honoured with an epigram, a kind of distinction which is never withheld at Paris from those who have succeeded in rivetting the public attention: M. le Chevalier de Langeac is supposed to be the author. We subjoin the turn of expression adopted by the epigrammatist.

" I saw yesterday the extravagant novelty of " the day, which triumphing over the police, pro- " fanes the enchanting drama of the French. In " this imprudent play every actor is a vice: Bar- " tholo, is Avarice; Almaviva, Seduction; his " tender rib, Adultery; Doublemain, Theft; Mar- " celline, a Fury; Basile, Calumny; Fanchette, " Innocence on its way to Seduction; Cherubin, " Libertinism; Suzon, Craft; as for Figaro, the " droll so perfectly resembles his patron, that

" the likeness makes one start; in short, that all " the vices might be seen together, the pit in full " chorus called for the author."

M. de Beaumarchais, far superior to a compliment of this nature, never once changed colour; he even devised a mode of turning it to account, by converting it to the glory of his piece and of his personal character; he mutilated a few verses of it, and more particularly the last, reprinted it, and on the day of its fourth representation, procured a number of printed copies to be thrown from the third tier of boxes into the pit; he had taken the precaution to send there all his friends, to whom he had announced that on that day would be hatched the most frightful plot against his innocent work; the epigram, altered to serve his turn, and supposed to have been thrown into the pit by his enemies, was immediately torn to pieces by the spectators, its author inquired for with loud cries, and condemned unanimously to the Bicêtre. This manœuvre, which certainly was original enough, and well worthy the own brother of Figaro, was executed some minutes before the curtain drew up, and brought the piece more plaudits than it had hitherto received. The alteration made by M. Beaumarchais in the last verse, was with the happy design of irritating the pit against the author; *and that all the vices might be seen together, hired simpletons called for the author.*

All these little literary compliments do not prevent the *Marriage of Figaro* from meeting

with the greatest success; indeed, to such a degree, that the author could not avoid saying, "*There is "one thing yet more mad than my piece, and that "is its success.*" Mademoiselle Arnoud foresaw it from the first;—*it is a work that will be condemned fifty evenings successively.* We are assured that the king thought it would be more severely handled. He asked the Marquis de Montesquieu, who was setting off to see its first representation, *Well, what do you augur of its success?* Sire, I hope it will fall. *And I too,* said the king.

As M. the Privy Seal continually inveighed against the representation of this comedy, the king said to him one day: *You will see that the Beaumarchais will enjoy more credit than M. the Privy Seal.*

Answer of M. de Beaumarchais to the Duke de Villequier, on the latter's requesting his private box for the use of some ladies who wished to see Figaro without being themselves seen.

"I have no consideration, M. le Duc, for women who permit themselves to see a spectacle which they consider immoral, provided they can see it in secret; I will not countenance such fancies. My piece was written to amuse not to instruct the public, not to give an opportunity for prudes to go and amuse themselves with it in a private box that they may abuse it in society. The pleasures of vice, and the honours of virtue, such is the prudery of the age. My piece is by no

means an equivocal work, it is necessary to avow or to avoid it. I salute you, M. le Duc, and I retain my box."

Under this form the letter has circulated in Paris for the last week; at first it was said to be addressed to M. le Duc de Villequier, afterwards to M. le Duc d'Aumont. It has appeared in this form even at Versailles, where it has been condemned as a piece of supreme impertinence; it is considered so much the more insolent as the ladies of the Court had declared, that if they went to see The Marriage of *Figaro*, it could only be in a private box; the most zealous defenders of M. de Beaumarchais have not dared to excuse this letter. After having enjoyed this new burst of celebrity, whether it was owing to his own ingenuity or to that of his enemies, M. de Beaumarchais has been compelled publicly to announce that this famous letter never was written by him to any duke or peer, but to one of his friends in the first heat of a trifling misunderstanding. It has since been discovered in fact, that this friend was M. du Paty, President of the Parliament of Bourdeaux, who had requested him to lend a latticed box for Madame P——, and for the young ladies their daughters.

The Works of Valentin Jamerai Duval, prefaced by Memoirs of his Life. Two Volumes in 8vo. with Plates. At St. Petersburgh, 1784.

The most interesting and curious of all the

works of M. Duval, is doubtless himself. It is well-known that for a long time he had no other instructors than his instinct and natural curiosity; that he lived to the age of twenty-two, in the forests, employed as a herdsman to the monks of St. Anne near Luneville; and in that solitude, left to himself, devoted to the most menial labours, he yet acquired a taste for reading, and made an uncommon progress in geography, history, and heraldry. One day when sitting at the foot of a tree, surrounded by maps, he was perceived by the suite of the young princes of Lorraine, who asking him some questions, he inspired by his answers no less interest than surprise. Having obtained from the patronage of Duke Leopold the necessary succour to pursue and finish his studies, he had afterwards the honour of being attached to Duke Francis, who, on being elected Emperor, appointed him director of the imperial library and cabinet of medals at Vienna.

The memoir of M. de Koch on the life of Duval, which is at the beginning of the first volume of the collection that we have the honour of announcing to you, is written with an affecting simplicity, and contains many curious anecdotes, because they paint to the life the character and disposition of the hermit, who, when transported into the midst of a brilliant court, did not the less preserve, under manners softened by an intercourse with the world, the primitive frankness, and, if I may so express myself, the primitive wildness of

his manners: I will only instance one example. Having left the Emperor one day very hastily, without waiting to be dismissed; whither are you going? said that prince to him.—*To hear Gabrielli sing, Sire.*—But she sings miserably.—*I entreat your Majesty to say that in a low voice.*—Why should I not say it loud?—*Because it is important for your Majesty to be believed by all the world, and if you say so, no one will believe you.*

There is something very natural in the history of the fortuitous and mechanical devotion which gained upon M. Duval at the hermitage of La Rochette, near the mountains of the Vosges; in the detail of his first studies at the hermitage of St. Anne, and particularly, in the description of the happiness which he enjoyed upon an oak in the forest which he had converted into a conservatory. The kind of battle which it was necessary to sustain against the religious inhabitants of St. Anne, who endeavoured to burn his maps and his books, and whom he very respectfully drove away to their own residence, as also the capitulation which followed this little warfare, present scenes that are truly original. The memoir in which he gives an account of the extreme agitation which the Opera of Isis, represented at Paris 1718, excited in him, forms an amusing contrast to that letter in which Saint-Preux pours forth so much bitterness and contempt on all the enchantments of this wonderful spectacle.

Are there any events sufficiently interesting to

plead our excuse, for having so long delayed to speak of the irreparable loss with which the Royal Academy of Music was threatened at the end of last year? The younger Vestris returned from London with a sprain in the right foot, which, without preventing him from walking, made it impossible to dance, or at least to dance with that grace, vigour, and precision which leave his rivals so far behind him. The last time that the Count de Haga was at the Opera, in the Queen's box, her Majesty, desirous that the august traveller should have the pleasure of seeing before his departure, one of the most uncommon talents of this theatre, sent word to young Vestris that she entreated him to dance as well as he could, if it were only a single *entrée;* the Queen had been informed that he had rehearsed on that very morning, but it was not added that the rehearsal had augmented his malady. Whether his answers went beyond the bounds of stupid arrogance and impertinence allowable to a dancer, or whether the envy and malignity of his companions had exaggerated them, they gave such offence to the Baron de Breteuil, that this minister thought proper to send the Sieur Vestris to the *Hôtel de la Force,* until he should be in a state to appear again and to expiate his fault. At this news, what reports, what divisions took place at Paris! all the world believed themselves compelled to side with Vestris or the Court; but nothing can be compared with the consternation of the whole house of Vestris. *Alas!*

said the god of dancing, with a heart wounded, and tears in his eyes, *this is the first squabble of our house with the family of the Bourbons!* To hear the public, or if I may be permitted to speak in a style less elevated though with more truth, to hear our simpletons of Paris, we should think the honour of the whole nation compromised; forgetful of the distance between the first of dancers, and the lowest step of the throne, some had the folly to say that the young man had disobeyed the orders of the Queen, and deserved to be driven from the theatre and the kingdom. On the other side, Vestris complained of injustice and calumny; the son declares, if they do not restore him to liberty, or if they persist in demanding an ignominious apology, he will never appear again on the boards of the theatre; the father threatens to quit France with all his august house; pamphlets, sarcasms, caricatures pour down on all sides; at last, after having seen the greatest powers of the world take part in this illustrious quarrel, the Queen herself had the goodness to allay the storm, to engage the Baron de Breteuil to take no further notice of the matter, and to restore this wild youth to liberty, who had in fact committed no other offence than that of refusing to present himself to the notice of the Count de Haga, without a certainty of justifying the opinion which he had received of his superior talent.

The day on which he re-appeared for the first

time, is a day for ever memorable in the annals of the Opera; never was an assembly more numerous or more agitated; all was trouble, confusion, and civil war. At the moment when he entered on the scene with Mademoiselle Guimard, a moment waited for with all the agony of impatience, some applauded, others hissed and cried like madmen, *on your knees! on your knees!* In vain they had chosen for this *pas de deux* the affecting air of *monseigneur, voyez mes larmes!* and a pantomine analagous to the character of the air, the noise of the two parties was so overpowering that even the orchestra could not be heard. Our young man alone lost neither his presence of mind, nor his time, and never did he dance more divinely; orders had been given to the guard to permit the pit to make all the noise it thought proper, but to hinder blows from passing; the animosity of the two parties was however too lively to abstain from that extremity; the serjeant perceiving that, when oranges failed, they began to throw stones on the theatre, and that a number of champions in this noble quarrel seized each other by the hair, introduced his grenadiers into the centre of the pit, and the example of a few prisoners taken to the guard-house, soon re-established order.

The second time that young Vestris re-appeared, the Count d'Oels honoured the spectacle with his presence. The scene was far more tranquil, and that day may be considered as the epoch of his

reconciliation with the public, or rather with his brother dancers, who discovered that they should not be on the strongest side.

The Follies of a Day, or the Marriage of Figaro.

This comedy, famous even before it was acted has just added to its many other titles of celebrity, the unheard of honour of attaining without interruption to its fiftieth representation.*

We do not scruple to say, that during this time the celebrated author of that celebrated comedy did not so much enjoy the success of his work, as the glory of having brought it forward in opposition to all the world, and, if I may so say, by the mere authority of his character, and his intrigues. We cannot suspect even M. de Beaumarchais of having foreseen that his comedy would not only produce a new æra in the history of our theatre, but also in the no less curious history of our fancies and entertainments.

This comedy has reached its sixty-first representation. M. de Beaumarchais, who has not yet thought it politic to publish it, and whom we have heard say, *that from his respect for the zeal of the actors he did not wish to put the printed work in opposition with that which was performed,* is preparing to prove, in a preface worthy of himself, that no co-

* The *Timocrate* of Thomas Corneille was represented eighty times in succession, 1656; but the receipts of these eighty representations could not be compared with those of forty representations of the Marriage of Figaro.

medy was ever written in which decency was more scrupulously guarded, and from which an impression more favourable to good morals could be deduced. This paradox, which is curious enough to support, redounds infinitely to the capacity and ways and means of M. de Beaumarchais. After having endeavoured to represent the Marriage of Figaro as a comedy that breathes the purest morality, it only remained to convert it into a work of piety, and this he has done with the greatest imaginable success.

On perceiving that this piece bade fair to reach its fiftieth representation, he hastened to announce in the *Journal de Paris* that he destined the product of his part, as author, to a work of charity the most useful and interesting. Some days after he informed the public, by the same channel, that an individual who had just then attained by his credit a lucrative post, conceived that he could not more worthily express his gratitude than by putting into his hands five hundred louis, to be added to the sums which he destined to the enterprise he had announced. He invites all men in place, commissioned to distribute favours, to bring this kind of acknowledgment into vogue, and to require it of all those to whom they had done any favour. This work of beneficence has at length been made known, by announcing the fiftieth representation of *the Marriage of Figaro, for the benefit of foster-mothers, to whom the whole produce has been consecrated, both by the players and the author.* We

are informed that M. de Beaumarchais would not have confined himself to a notice so simple and modest, if the police had been inclined to permit him to publish in the *Journal de Paris* a letter, in which he put no restraint on his strictures, both on the censors of his work, and even on the administration itself; the Lieutenant-General of Police thought it his duty to invite him to confine himself to the mere notice of the destination of the produce resulting from the fiftieth representation of the *Marriage of Figaro*, and this fiftieth representation was as numerously attended as the first. The Count d'Oels assisted at it; and paid at the entrance a note of three hundred livres. His example was not much followed; little more than the usual receipt was collected at the door when the theatre was quite full. Indeed we can hardly imagine that the impression made by the letter of M. de Beaumarchais, in which he proclaimed the French actors perpetual cashiers of the sums which the spectators should daily remit for the relief of mothers who nursed children, could have excited to a greater degree the sensibility of the public; persons who go habitually to the theatre are far more taken up with the pleasure which they there expect to enjoy, than with the poverty and even the sufferings of individuals, as interesting as difficult to assist in a manner proportioned to their real wants.

Whatever may be the motive of M. de Beaumarchais, we cannot but applaud the good work

he has performed, and the offer he has made of entirely consecrating the product of his own gains, which already exceed thirty-six thousand livres, to the relief of poor women who bring up children, if the public are willing to open a subscription for the same purpose. A woman condemned by her situation to ignorance of *Figaro* and of its success, and of the purpose to which the fiftieth representation of that comedy was to be applied, will be indebted wholly to chance for the portion which M. de Beaumarchais reserves for her. This woman, who lived in a hamlet at seventy leagues from Paris, had received into her house the child of a chorus-singer at the Opera, five years ago, to bring him up. She had been paid with some regularity for her trouble during the first two years; but afterwards, receiving neither any account of the money nor the money itself, she determined on coming to Paris with her foster-child. The father and mother had left that city three years before. Those who knew the object which this woman sought, directed her to make application at the Opera; she arrived there at the time of a rehearsal; she enquired for M. and Madame le Grand. She was answered that both of them, overwhelmed by debts, had been compelled to fly that part of the world, and no one knew whither they were gone. "*Well, well,*" said the woman, "*I suspected it; had it not been for my husband I would not have travelled thus far. Come, my friend,*" she added, to the child whom she held in

her hand, "*let us return home, it is just as if we had done nothing.*" This woman was questioned: it appeared that she had brought up the child, whose parents she had come in search of to the Opera, for five years; but since no one knew where they were gone, she was going to return home with her foster-child, *who would not be worse off than if he had father and mother, if she herself had not eight other children to maintain.* These few words, said with that simplicity of virtue which considers itself only as doing a natural action without suspecting its generosity, interested very much all who surrounded her; even the subaltern actors of the song and dance forgot for a moment their own necessities, to pour the little money which they had into the hands of this good woman. Some of them, informed of the approaching representation of the *Marriage of Figaro* for the benefit of foster-mothers, thought they could not better answer the intentions of M. de Beaumarchais than by directing this woman to him. And they were not deceived. She returns into her own country with a sum which will reward her cares, which will always prove to her that her husband was not wrong in making her undertake the journey to Paris, but which will never recompence the generous indifference with which, on hearing the impossibility of finding the parents of her foster child, she was taking him back so contentedly into her village without repining, and almost without regret.

November, 1784.

I have never met the Baron de Tott in the world without wishing to be able to read his memoirs. Few men in Europe have had more opportunities of making observations; not only has he lived long among the people whom he describes, but after having thoroughly learned the customs and manners of the country, he was intimately connected with persons at the head of the government; he has seen them in difficulties where his services have been of the greatest utility, where his interference rendered confidence indispensable, where that which statesmen might have the greatest interest in concealing could hardly escape his notice; in a word, in the midst of the cares and labours of a most active existence he has amassed those observations which he has just committed to print, in four volumes in-8vo, under the title of *Memoirs of Baron de Tott on the Turks and Tartars.*

These memoirs have been reproached with being too much or too little connected, that is to say, of failing in general in connection, and yet of affecting at times useless transitions, which, far from adding to the interest of the narrative, have no other effect than to retard it. They have besides been accused of many negligences, many grammatical faults, and that not without reason; it has been remarked that these faults, these negligences, were so much the more prominent, as the style of the author is not always exempt from emphasis and pretension. This criticism appears to be well founded: it has

been remarked besides that the most interesting were confounded with the most insignificant details; that a trifle was frequently related more circumstantially, and with more parade, than the most important or curious fact, and that in many places the story was defective both in precision and clearness. These remarks are at least severe; but even were they better founded, they could not make us forget the instruction and interest which the work of M. de Tott offers. We have read nothing which can give a more faithful idea of the government and manners of the Turkish nation. We have not here dissertations on the forms of governing that empire, on the nature and origin of its customs, on the principles of its policy and religion; but we are presented with precious anecdotes which all bear the impression of accurate observation, facts isolated indeed, but of very great importance, details unconnected in truth, but whose connection is useful in bringing forward the prevailing character of the nation. The author presents objects as they appear to his own eyes; he paints only what he has witnessed; but few travellers have had the same advantages of using their eyes as our author; he is an observer for ever in action, and frequently compelled to act a part of infinite difficulty and infinite delicacy. The interest which has guided him in his observations communicates itself to his recitals, impresses on them a more lively and animated motion, and frequently places him personally in the picture in an attitude new and graceful. Employed

In the most intricate negociations his presence of mind is never at a loss, his activity makes up for all, and when external resources are wanting he finds them in his own industry. Ambassador in a city where not a tolerable house was to be found, he turns architect and builds himself an hotel. Does he wish to make people declare war who are unprovided with artillery, he engages to furnish cannon himself, and with the aid of a few pages of the Encyclopædia, establishes a foundery, and surpasses even his own expectations; he is indeed the Robinson Crusoe of politicians.

The first volume of M. de Tott's Memoirs contains the journal of his first residence in Turkey; the second that of his residence with the Khan of the Tartars, and of the expedition made with him into New Servia; the third, that of his sojourn at Constantinople: there we learn the services which he rendered the Porte, during the last war, for the defence of the Dardanelles, for the formation of a new corps of artillery, of a mathematical school, &c. The fourth volume is the journal of his last voyage to the ports of the Levant, whither he had been sent by government to inspect the different establishments of French commerce. Although his description of Egypt is very short, it appears to us to throw a light on this country equally new and interesting.

January, 1785.

The Meeting of two Friends; by the Chevalier de B.....

Two friends, who had not seen each other for a long time, met at the Exchange. "How are you?" said one of them.—"Not very well," said the other.—"So much the worse, what have you been doing since I saw you last?"—"I have been married."—"So much the better."—"Not so much the better, for I married a bad wife."—"So much the worse."—"Not so much the worse, for her dowry was two thousand louis."—"So much the better."—"Not so much the better, for I laid out a part of that sum in sheep which have all died of the rot."—"So much the worse."—"Not so much the worse, because the sale of their skins has brought me more than the original price of the sheep."—"So much the better."—"Not so much the better, for the house in which I had deposited the sheep-skins and the money, has just been burned."—"Oh! so much the worse."—"Not so much the worse, for my wife was within."

On the 25th of January was represented, at the French theatre, *Abdir*, a drama in four acts and in verse, by M. de Sauvigny, author of the tragedy of the *Illinois*, of the opera of *Péronne Preserved*, and the drama of *Gabrielle d'Estrées*. The crime, to which is given the appellation of *Reprisals*, a crime which war and the barbarous ideas of the rights of men seem to authorise, furnished to

M. de Sauvigny the ground-work of the tragic drama of which I have the honour to give you an account. It is an event which took place on the Continent of America during the last war. You can well remember the general interest which Sir —— Asgill inspired, a young officer in the English guards, who was made prisoner and condemned to death by the Americans in reprisal for the death of Captain Huddy, who was hanged by order of Captain Lippincott. The public prints all over Europe resounded with the unhappy catastrophe which for eight months impended over the life of this young officer. The extreme grief of his mother, the sort of delirium which clouded the mind of his sister at hearing of the dreadful fate which menaced the life of her brother, interested every feeling mind in the fate of that unfortunate family. The general curiosity, with regard to the events of the war, yielded, if I may so say, to the interest which young Asgill inspired, and the first question asked of all vessels that arrived from any port in North America, was always an enquiry into the fate of that young man. It is known that Asgill was thrice conducted to the foot of the gibbet, and that thrice General Washington, who could not bring himself to commit this crime of policy without a great struggle, suspended his punishment; his humanity and justice made him hope that the English General would deliver over to him the author of the crime which Asgill was condemned to expiate. Clinton, either ill obeyed, or insensible to the fate of the

young Asgill, persisted in refusing to deliver up the barbarous Lippincott. In vain the King of England, at whose feet this unfortunate family fell down, had given orders to surrender up to the Americans the author of a crime which dishonoured the English nation; George III. was not obeyed. In vain the States of Holland entreated of the United States of America the pardon of the unhappy Asgill; the gibbet erected in front of his prison, did not cease to offer to his eyes those dreadful preparatives more awful than death itself. In these circumstances, and almost reduced to despair, the mother of the unfortunate victim bethought herself that the minister of a King armed against her own nation might succeed in obtaining that which was refused to her King. Lady Asgill wrote to the Count de Vergennes a letter, the eloquence of which independent of oratorical forms, is that of all people and all languages, because it derives its power from the first and noblest sentiment of our nature.

The two memorials which are subjoined, merit being preserved as historical monuments.

Letter from Lady Asgill to the Comte de Vergennes.

"SIR,

"If the politeness of the French court will permit a stranger to address it, it cannot be doubted but that she who unites in herself all the more delicate sensations with which an individual can be penetrat-

ed, will be received favourably by a nobleman, who reflects honour not only on his nation, but on human nature. The subject on which I implore your assistance is too heart-rending to be dwelt upon; most probably the public report of it has already reached you; this relieves me from the burthen of so mournful a duty. My son, my only son, dear to me as he is brave, amiable as he is beloved, only nineteen years of age, a prisoner of war, in consequence of the capitulation of York-Town, is at present confined in America as an object of reprisals. Shall the innocent suffer the fate of the guilty? Figure to yourself, Sir, the situation of a family in these circumstances. Surrounded as I am with objects of distress, bowed down by fear and grief, words are wanting to express what I feel, and to paint such a scene of misery: my husband given over by his physicians some hours before the arrival of this news, not in a condition to be informed of it; my daughter attacked by a fever accompanied with delirium; speaking of her brother in tones of wildness, and without an interval of reason, unless it be to listen to some circumstances which may console her heart. Let your sensibility, Sir, paint to you my profound, my inexpressible misery, and plead in my favour; a word, a word from you, like a voice from Heaven, would liberate us from desolation, from the last degree of misfortune. I know how far General Washington reveres your character. Tell him only that you wish my son restored to liberty, and he will restore him to his desponding

family; he will restore him to happiness. The virtue and courage of my son will justify this act of clemency. His honour, Sir, led him to America; he was born to abundance, to independence, and to the happiest prospects. Permit me once more to intreat the interference of your high influence in favour of innocence, and in the cause of justice and humanity. Dispatch, Sir, a letter from France to General Washington, and favour me with a copy of it, that it may be transmitted from hence. I feel the whole weight of the liberty taken in presenting this request. But I feel confident, whether granted or not, that you will pity the distress by which it is suggested; your humanity will drop a tear upon my fault, and blot it out for ever.

"May that heaven which I implore, grant that you may never need the consolation which you have it in your power to bestow on

"THERESA ASGILL."

It was to this letter, that young Asgill owed his life and liberty. His mother was informed almost at the same instant, that the minister of the King of France had written to General Washington to procure the pardon of her son, and that his request had been granted. If any thing can convey an idea of the mournful sentiments, to which this parent was a prey during eight months, it is that sentiment which her gratitude inspires in the letter addressed to the Count de Vergennes, on hearing that she owed the restoration of her son to his

interference; the greatest talents never produced any thing more noble or equally affecting.

Second Letter of Lady Asgill to the Comte de Vergennes.

"Exhausted by long suffering, overpowered by an excess of unexpected happiness, confined to my bed by weakness and languor, bent to the earth by what I have undergone, my sensibility alone could supply me with strength sufficient to address you.

"Condescend, Sir, to accept this feeble effort of my gratitude. It has been laid at the feet of the Almighty; and, believe me, it has been presented with the same sincerity to you, Sir, and to your illustrious sovereigns; by their august and salutary intervention, as by your own, a son is restored to me, to whom my own life was attached. I have the sweet assurance, that my vows for my protectors are heard by heaven, to whom they are ardently offered. Yes, Sir, they will produce their effect before the dreadful and last tribunal, where I indulge in the hope that we shall both appear together; you to receive the recompense of your virtues; myself, that of my sufferings. I will raise my voice before that imposing tribunal. I will call for those sacred registers, in which your humanity will be found recorded. I will pray that blessings may be showered on your head, upon him, who availing himself of the noblest privilege received from God, a privilege no other than divine,

has changed misery into happiness, has withdrawn the sword from the innocent head, and restored the worthiest of sons to the most tender and unfortunate of mothers.

"Condescend, Sir, to accept this just tribute of gratitude due to your virtuous sentiments. Preserve this tribute, and may it go down to your posterity as a testimony of your sublime and exemplary beneficence to a stranger whose nation was at war with your own, but whose tender affections had not been destroyed by war. May this tribute bear testimony to my gratitude long after the hand that expresses it with the heart, which at this moment only vibrates with the vivacity of grateful sentiments shall be reduced to dust; even to the last day of my existence, it shall beat but to offer you all the respect and all the gratitude with which it is penetrated.

"THERESA ASGILL."

A friend was talking to Mademoiselle Arnoud on the illness of M. de la Harpe, a malady very celebrated in antiquity. *Yes*, said she, *it is the leprosy, and this is all that he possesses from the antients.*

Of the Love of Henry the Fourth for Letters. 1 *Vol. in*-16.

This little work is by the Abbé Brizard, the destined successor of M. Chérin, genealogist to the King, who died a few days since.

Although all the anecdotes contained in it are not new, we re-peruse them with much interest; many of them at least were very little known. I transcribe one of this description which appears to me too characteristic to be passed over in silence.

" Henry, when he was eleven years old, had been reading the lives of Camillus and of Coriolanus. La Gaucherie, his preceptor, asked him to which of the two he gave the preference, and which he had rather resemble; the youth charmed with the virtue of Camillus, without hesitation gave him the palm—and on calling to mind the exploits of the two Romans, he conceived as great an admiration for the generosity of the first, as indignation for the crime of the other. La Gaucherie, seeing him thus heated, said to him, *well then, you have a Coriolanus in your family;* then the grave instructor recounted to him the history of the Constable de Bourbon.—During this recital, the youth was agitated, paced the chamber backwards and forwards, sat down, rose up, stamped with his feet, and shed tears of rage, which he strove in vain to conceal; at length, no longer able to contain himself, he takes his pen, runs to a genealogical chart of the House of Bourbon, which was on the wall, effaces the name of the Constable, and writes in its stead that of the Chevalier Bayard."

How can we forget that no less honourable sentiment, contained in a letter written by this prince at the age of twenty-four, to M. de Batz, who had offered him his castle of *Suberbye*? " Though

" thou beest amongst them of the Pope, I have
" not, as thou mayest suspect, a mistrust of thee
" concerning these things. Those who follow
" straight forward their conscience, are of my re-
" ligion, and, for mine own part, I am of theirs
" who are brave and good."

Authentic Memoirs to illustrate the History of Count de Cagliostro. A Pamphlet in-12mo. supposed to be printed at Basle.

As this singular production is not at present generally known, we are anxious to extract for your amusement the most curious parts of its contents.

" The Count de Cagliostro was born without
" fortune, of an obscure family, with violent pas-
" sions: he was desirous to try whether fortune, who
" favours so many people of very moderate talents,
" would disdain to smile on him..... He began
" by conferring on himself a title; and that of
" Count appeared the lowest to which his merit
" ought to aspire. He sought in the houses of the
" worst fame at Venice a wife suited to his purpose.
" Unheard of misfortunes had brought a Genoese
" Marchioness into those asylums of misery, rather
" than of pleasure. A neat and slender figure, a
" sparkling eye, a neck that would well bear exa-
" mination, a light step, sweet breath; such were
" her natural advantages. Her acquired talents
" were not inferior to them; wanton in language,
" profound in speculations, a calculator beneath
" the mask of whim and playfulness, incapable of

" any good sentiments; in one word, a woman
" consummate in the arts of seducing and deceiv-
" ing, talking of virtue, but practising vice, and
" assuming an appearance that imposed upon the
" multitude."

" This well matched couple did not consider
" themselves adepts enough to try their first for-
" tunes at Paris: *we are not yet sufficiently expert*
" *for that country*, said the Marchioness, *there*
" *the first swindlers in the world resort; the court,*
" *the city, the clergy, the long robe, the finance*
" *can boast consummate practitioners.* .... She
" turned her thoughts to Russia; they wanted
" money; the Marchioness was commissioned to
" provide it. A crowd of English were at that
" time in Rome; she flew thither with designs
" upon their purses. In one short month she
" realizes five thousand guineas; and although her
" expenses were also considerable, enough remained
" for the purchase of bad diamonds, and all the
" equipage of quackery."

Such is the outline of the portrait which the author has painted of his heroes. He first conducts them into Holstein, to pay the famous Count de Saint-Germain the homage of their desires to become *his slaves, his apostles and his martyrs, and to acquire some one of the fourteen thousand seven hundred secrets which he kept locked up in his bosom.* This celebrated proficient is not painted in more favourable colours.

" The Count de Saint-Germain, who died some

" years since, and is already forgotten, was a serious " madman, with very little wit, some trifling know- " ledge of chemistry,* endowed neither with the " impudence which befits a charlatan, nor the elo- " quence necessary to a fanatic, nor the seduction " which enchants the half-learned. When at " Chambéry he offered his chemical assistance to " the Marquis de Bellegarde. They set them- " selves to work: the crucible yielded a substance " possessed of the colour and weight, though not " of the ductility of gold. These operations were " carried on in an estate where, in the course of " seven months, the Count was thrice a father. " The silver plate began to be missing; he had run " in debt on every side; he was advised to depart " from thence. At Paris the same adventure oc- " curred, &c."

The Count and Countess de Cagliostro made their appearance at Petersburgh in the quality of physicians. There they displayed a rare disinterestedness; this step met with complete success. The Countess was twenty years of age, and used to speak without the least semblance of affectation of

* This portrait is untrue in many respects. The Count de Saint-Germain appeared to all who knew him a man of much wit. He was possessed of that natural eloquence which is most fitting to seduce; he was very well versed in chemistry, and few people were his equals in history. He had the talent of citing in conversation the most important events of Antient History, and of recounting them as we recount the anecdote of the day, with the same details, the same degree of interest and vivacity.

her eldest son, who had for a long time been a captain in the Dutch service. "A phenomenon so "extraordinary produced a discussion on her age, "and it was found that a woman whose breath, "bosom, teeth, attested the freshness of extreme "youth, already counted more than eight lustres. "....The ladies, as expert in diminishing the "number of their years as the Countess in in- "creasing hers, came to consult in secret the de- "pository of the *Fountain of Youth.* The Count "distributed his waters and lotions; treasures "flowed in upon him; the ladies did not grow "young again; but their lovers assured them that "they did, and Cagliostro was esteemed a God."

A great prince became sensible to the charms of the Countess and lavished presents upon her. One day she received an order to appear before the Empress. The Countess gave a false account of herself, and lied with an address which convinced the Sovereign. The order to quit Russia was accompanied with a present of twenty thousand roubles. The question concerned a child which had disappeared, and another suppositious child; the following are the particulars.*

"A mother was on the eve of losing a beloved "child two years old. She promised five thousand

* All this again appears apocryphal, We know at least that a very great lady in Russia was much astonished to learn that a man who could not dupe the people who of all others are the soonest imposed upon by charlatans, should have so perfectly succeeded in making dupes in France.

" louis to Cagliostro if he could recover her infant. " He required eight days. On the second the ill- " ness became more alarming; he intreated per- " mission to take the child away from home. On " the fifth day he announced a change for the " better; on the eighth he pledged himself to the " cure, and in short at the expiration of three " weeks he returned an infant to the grateful and " tender mother. A certain rumour got wind of " a child that had been bought. Cagliostro con- " fessed the infant that he returned to be suppo- " sititious, that the true child was dead, and that " he considered it an act of kindness to deceive the " grief of the mother for a certain time. Justice " demanded what had become of the corpse of the " first; Cagliostro confessed that he burned it to " make an experiment of regeneration. The five " thousand louis were required back; they had dis- " appeared."

On leaving Russia, the Count went to Warsaw. The laugh was, at present, by no means on his side. He modestly took up his residence at Strasburg; but he changed his plan, and enlisted on his side the priests and the poor. It was to no purpose that the gazettes denounced him to the small number of reasonable men. One of the principal men in the city appeared to credit the public reports; Madame de Cagliostro found the means of dissuading him, and at the same moment immolated and saved her husband.

Paris was the theatre on which Cagliostro was

destined to make a figure. He there announced himself as the reviver of Egyptian Free-masonry, and as one who was prepared to restore to his brethren the mysteries of Isis and Anubis. "In "an instant the seventy-two lodges spread over "that capital were all expectation. All the world "knows that there is a Free-masonry of women, a "literary, a reformed Free-masonry, and a Free-"masonry of children. This institution, conse-"crated of old to friendship and to charity, has "been metamorphosed into academy, lyceum, "club, ball-room, grand suppers. . . . . Struck with "these abuses the Count Cagliostro brought with "him the regulations of Egyptian Free-masonry, "which Cambyses took in the temple of Apis, "when he gave orders to sacrifice to that capri-"cious god."

The beauty of Madame de Cagliostro made almost as much sensation as the Egyptian Free-masonry. Among a crowd of adorers she distinguished the Chevalier d'Oisemont. She then became acquainted with Madame de la Motte Valois: "You have a lover, said this latter lady, who is "very assiduous; he is a young man; do not let "his assiduities appear in company. She who "aims at celebrity should banish from about her "those titled caterpillars. . . If, as I rather suspect, "marriage is hard of digestion to you, take a man "of distinction. I can give you a prince * of a

* This is another circumstance which should call in question the veracity of our historian. Madame de la Motte had

" fine figure, although rather broken by excesses; " rich, but avaricious; full of spirit; insolent, but " amiable; discreet, by no means sentimental, but " a man of more than mere words." .... Madame de Cagliostro at first objected that her husband had the secret of being in many places at the same time, and of making himself invisible wherever he was.

While M. de Cagliostro was making the dead sup with the living, his wife, worthy of her husband, was playing another farce. The women, curious to excess, were dejected at not being admitted to those mysteries, and entreated Madame de Cagliostro to initiate them. She very coolly answered the Duchess de T***, who was commissioned to make the first overtures, that when she should have found thirty-six adepts, she would begin her course of magic. On that very day the list was filled up. These were the preliminary conditions.

1st. That each of the initiated should furnish a hundred louis.

2d. That during nine days she should abstain from all intercourse with her fellow creatures.

certainly no hand in giving M. de Rohan to Madame de Cagliostro; her husband had infatuated the mind of the Cardinal long before he had any connection with Madame de la Motte, and we are assured that a document was found among the papers of M. de Rohan which clearly proved more than a hundred thousand francs to have been given by his Eminence to the Count de Cagliostro.

3d. That an oath should be taken to submit to every thing prescribed them.

The 17th of August was the grand day. Every woman on entering was obliged to take off the greater part of her dress, and to put on a white *levite* with a coloured girdle. There were six in black girdles, six in blue, six in scarlet, six in nondescript. They were then conducted into a temple lighted up, surrounded by thirty-six arm chairs covered with black satin. Madame de Cagliostro, arrayed in white, was on a sort of throne, escorted by two tall figures so artfully arrayed that it was difficult to decide whether they were spectres, men, or women. The light of this room insensibly grew dim, and when objects could hardly be discovered, the high priestess issued an order to uncover the left leg up to the thigh. After this discipline, she commanded them to raise the right arm, and rest it against the next column. Then two women, each armed with a sword, entered, and receiving from Madame de Cagliostro some silken chains, tied the thirty-six ladies by the arms and legs.

The grand priestess then explained to the initiated that the state in which they then were was the symbol of that slavery and dependance in which men endeavoured to keep them in society:—"Let us leave them," she added, "to reduce to order the chaos of their laws; but be it our part to govern opinion, to purify morals, to cultivate wit, to maintain delicacy, to diminish the number of the

unfortunate. These cares are quite as important as those of deciding on foolish quarrels."

The bands were then untied, and certain trials were announced. The candidates were divided into six groups, and each colour was shut up in one of the six apartments which corresponded with the temple. It was declared, that those who yielded to the trial should never enter the doors again. Soon after certain men entered each apartment, and employed every art of seduction. "Neither reasonings, nor sarcasms, nor tears, nor prayers, nor despair, nor promises had any effect, to such a degree do curiosity and a secret hope of sway influence women. All again entered the temple as immaculate as the grand priestess would have desired them."... After a quarter of an hour's silence, a sort of dome opened, and on a large golden ball descended a man, naked as Adam, holding in his hand a serpent, and bearing on his head a dazzling flame. "He whom you are going to hear," said the grand priestess, "is the celebrated, the immortal, the divine Cagliostro;* depository of all that has been, of all that is, and of all that shall be known by the earth."—"Daughters of the earth," he exclaimed, "strip off that profane cloathing, and if you wish to hear truth, shew yourselves like her."—In an instant the whole assembly was naked as your hand.

* The translator has omitted a sentence more honoured in the omission than in the citation.

If we may believe the historian, the pretended *genius of truth* counselled them to abjure a deceitful sex; "*Let the kiss of friendship,*" said he at the close of his extravagant discourse, "*announce what passes in your hearts!*" and the high priestess instructed them what was meant by the kiss of friendship.

Such mysteries were very well adapted to bring the Count and Countess de Cagliostro into fashion. He laid hold of the moment when enthusiasm was at its highest, to lay the first stone of Egyptian free-masonry. He announced to the *lights* of the *mighty East* that we could only labour under a triple vault, that there could be neither more nor less than thirteen proficients, that they ought to be as pure as the rays of the sun, and respected by calumny itself, without wife, mistress, or any other source of indulgence; should possess an income of fifty-three thousand livres, and particularly that kind of knowledge rarely found with large revenues.

Some notes make this pamphlet yet more curious. The different classes of our alchymists are there also described.

"The unknown chemists retire to the *fau-*
"*bourg* Saint-Marceau. Their mania is to give
"out that they are persecuted by the police. Some
"make gold, others fix mercury. Some blow,
"and double the size of diamonds, others compose
"elixirs. Some fabricate powders, others distil
"waters; all possess treasures, and yet all die of

" hunger. Their language is unintelligible, their " exterior is that of misery, their habitation is " filthy and dark; and when curiosity draws you " for a moment into one of those miserable holes, " you perceive in a corner a vicious looking wretch " who has the appearance of a sorceress, and who " guards the laboratory while the chemist is look- " ing abroad for dupes——The more celebrated " adepts have superb laboratories, furnished with " costly instruments and vessels of much value. " Two or three apprentices appear as if they were " working, and when the stranger arrives the " director displays the hope of realizing the most " important secrets; he shews him the most *fortu-* " *nate beginnings*: he promises him that the third " moon will *see—to see* is a term of art which says " a hundred times more than can be expressed—— " There are, however, some beings who confound " incredulity itself. They have neither estates, " nor contracts, nor incomes, nor family, nor " trade, and yet they live, and keep up a certain " expense; strangers to stock-jobbing, to the in- " trigues of women, where could they find such " constant supplies? The inspectors of coins agree " that a sort of gold is brought to them which has " been made by human hands. In one word, " there are things too clear to be disbelieved, and " too obscure to be adopted."

The patriarch of literary men, the Bishop de Burigny, born at Rheims, member of the Acade-

my of Inscriptions, has just terminated his long career. He lived nearly a century without affliction, almost without infirmity, and it is difficult to say whether he were most to be envied for an existence so happy and peaceful, or for a death so sweet and tranquil. He felt no more pain at the approach of death than at that of slumber; he disposed himself to die, as he would arrange his pillow to support his head when inclined to sleep. The only uneasiness which he felt in his last hours, was the fear of not having ceased to live before the return of his friend Madame de la Ferté-Imbault, at whose house he was residing; she was in the country, and he earnestly desired to spare her the sorrow and embarrassment of his funeral procession; even this last wish was accomplished. Sleep and death are in the Iliad termed brothers. M. de Burigny might have said like the old Gorgias, who, when at the point of death, answered one of his friends who enquired how he felt, "*Sleep is on the point of giving me over to the custody of his brother.*"

In the works which M. de Burigny has left behind, we discover more learning than wit or talent; but his first production, his *Treatise on the Authority of the Popes*, produced at the time of its appearance a considerable sensation. We have from his pen a *History of Pagan Philosophy*, a *General History of Sicily*, a *Treatise on Porphyrius*, the *Revolutions of Constantinople*, the *Life of Grotius*, that of *Erasmus*, and that of *Bossuet*,

&c. He was one of the most humble and devoted servants of Madame Geoffrin, but without ever being much in her good graces. When she suffered two days to elapse without scolding him, he believed himself lost and forgotten, and these were, I believe, the severest trials which his philosophy had to undergo, during the course of a long life. He was naturally good, timid, and laborious; but he laboured rather from taste than ambition; and this kind of occupation, which employed him without fatigue or exertion, could hardly ruffle the calm and serenity of his soul.

Memoirs of the History, Sciences, Arts, Manners, Usages, &c. of the Chinese; by the Missionaries of Pekin. Vol. X. in 4to.

This volume contains a succession of celebrated Chinese portraits, a long letter of M. Amyot, in which we find some curious details on the administration of Kien Long, and on the submersion of the isle of Formosa, May 11, 1782, with a collection of thoughts extracted from different Chinese books, by M. Cibot, missionary of Pekin. We cannot refuse ourselves the pleasure of transcribing some of these thoughts.

"All the virtues which the Prince acquires "are disgraces to the wicked."

"Raillery is the lightning of calumny."

"How near are two hearts to each other when "there is no vice between them."

"He who has ten leagues to travel, should "count nine for the half-way."

"Receive your thoughts as guests, and treat "your desires as children."

"What has been most truly the age of philo- "sophy? That in which there were not yet any "philosophers."

"To sacrifice conscience to ambition, is to "burn a picture to get possession of its ashes."

"In vain does wit try to go further than the "heart, it never goes so far."

"Never have we so much need of wit, as when "we have to do with a fool."

"To what is vice reduced when we cut off "from it that which does not belong to any "virtue."

This last thought is perhaps more subtle than profound; would it not be more simple to say that a man who should unite all the virtues would never have any interest in being vicious? For it is perhaps only for the purpose of supplying the deficiency of virtues, more particularly of those whose practice demands exertion, that men can find any advantage in giving themselves up to vice, as a method more commodious of attaining to the end which they propose.

We have long known that the publication of this work was owing to the care of M. Bertin; but we were ignorant until now of his motive for publishing it. We subjoin it.

Louis XV, who, as M. Schomberg used to

say, was the greatest philosopher in his kingdom, was perfectly sensible at times that all did not go on well in France. In a conversation one day with M. Bertin, on the necessity of reforming so many abuses, he concluded by saying that it was impossible to succeed without entirely new moulding the mind of the nation, and entreated him to consider how that could with certainty be effected. M. Bertin promised to give the subject some consideration, and at the end of a few days he told the King that he believed he had at last found the secret of satisfying the paternal wishes of his Majesty.—"And what is that secret?"—"*Sire, it is to inoculate the French with the Chinese character.*"—The King thought this idea so luminous, that he approved all that his minister had suggested for its execution. At a great expense certain young literati were imported from China; they were carefully instructed in our language and sciences; they were afterwards sent back again to Pekin; and the collection of which we have the honour to announce to you the tenth volume, is taken from the memoirs of these new missionaries. The national mind does not, in fact appear to have undergone the happy revolution which this ingenious decree of M. Bertin was intended to produce; but we can yet remember the time when all our chimney-pieces were covered with Chinese porcelain, and when the greater part of our furniture was in the Chinese taste,

Portrait of a Man of Letters who aspires only to the enjoyment of a momentary reputation.

" This man for ever sacrifices the duration to " the lustre of his popularity, truth to effect; he " produces without ceasing, because he wishes the " public to talk of nothing but himself, and no- " thing ripens in his hands, because he is devoured " with the impatience of gathering. For ever rest- " less, for ever touchy, he passes his life in listen- " ing around him to the noise which he believes " himself to excite; he lays down rules, he makes " distinctions, he assigns limits, forgetful that " genius sometimes overleaps those barriers with " success. He turns pale at successes, and analy- " ses them by reducing them to his own level. Un- " fortunate man! as if merit could not exist but " at his own expense; as if the career of glory " were not a common country, an inexhaustible " field, whose harvests succeed each other in suc- " cession; as if it were not more honourable to rise " to eminence in the midst of rivals whom we ho- " nour, than to soar above mediocrity, and tyran- " nize over a desert!"

May, 1786.

We all remember the great revolution which M. Bertin meditated when he very seriously proposed to Louis the XV. to inoculate the French with the Chinese character. Without suspecting any one of our present ministers of a similar project, shall we not be tempted to believe that some genius

as enterprising as that of M. Bertin has been engaged during some years with the means of inoculating us with the English character, and that it has even succeeded tolerably well? It is at least certain that the taste not only for the fashions, but for the customs and manners of this rival nation, has never been carried further than in France. To believe it, we have only to look around. To be yet more sadly convinced of it, we have only to consult during ten or twelve years the balance of our commerce with England. We shall then see what the mania for horses, carriages, furniture, stuffs, and trinkets of all sorts which arrive here from all the ports of Great-Britain costs to this kingdom. The only foreign language which we cultivate with any application, the only one which enters essentially in the plan of education or of fashion is the English language; the only foreign books which we deign to translate are English books.

But this is not all; these are trifling objects, which vary and leave only weak impressions; but there are others which have a much more powerful influence on the manners, and even on the basis of the character. That which during many ages has modified in the most characteristic manner the genius of the nation, is gallantry, the spirit of society, and the taste for the toilet; this last article, if we reflect at all on the subject, is of the greatest importance from its close affinity with the two others. Well! the English mania and its frightful progress, threatens equally the gallantry of

France, the talent for society, and their taste for the toilet.

It is unusual at this day to meet in the world people who can be called dressed. The women are in dishabille, the men in a frock and waistcoat. I allow it, this manner of dressing is very convenient, it is not wholly destitute of grace; but has it the grandeur, the dignity suitable to a nation, which has so long enjoyed the noble privilege of serving as a model and example for all others? Can that nation practise with equal success that attention, that taste, that extreme desire to please, whose habit is so desirable to contract, even in little things, because it afterwards applies without effort to greater, to the customs of society, to the culture of the mind, to the chefs-d'œuvre of the arts, to genius and imagination?

How shall the spirit of society preserve itself in the midst of so many tastes calculated to estrange us from it, more and more every day; how be upheld in the midst of so many new institutions which seem to be imagined only to destroy it! The spirit of society is only formed in those circles, where men and women associating freely together, are mutually inspired with the desire of appearing amiable, and where this desire to please, in calling forth wit and imagination, in permitting nothing offensive to taste or decency, give to the ideas as well as to the language more grace and delicacy, and often even more propriety and sweetness; for if the ideas of an uncultivated mind have more originality, those which

have been softened by the attention due to society are more generally correct, or at least, more universally applicable. But where shall we find henceforward those circles so well calculated to maintain the national character, if we continue to follow the bent our manners and customs appear to have taken?

Men and women doubtless yet meet at times; but dare we say that they see each other? Since the establishment of private-boxes, hardly any but intimate friends can expect to find ladies at home. If the box is not really occupied, it is at all events a good excuse to shut the door against society, and only to leave it open to the friend of the day, of the past evening, or of the morrow. *Twenty years ago*, said Mademoiselle Clairon to me the other day, *a lady who should have appeared more than three or four times a month at the theatre would have been posted in the most indecent manner over the city.* Thanks to the invention of private-boxes, they now go there with impunity every day, and are never found at home, excepting at the time of supper; of course, the private circle does not begin till ten o'clock at night; in those houses where they do not gamble, they sit down immediately to table; but the ladies are in general left to themselves; the men, even those who are young, no longer sup; they remain in the drawing-room to play or talk among themselves; how should they sup when they have dined at the English hour of four or five o'clock? The hour for the theatre not being put back like that of the

dinner, and the rage of frequenting public amusements becoming more universal than ever, they sally out from the houses where they have dined, as they would from a tavern; the time which should be devoted to conversation is lost no less after the dinner, than before the supper.

The philosophy of the age is so convenient! It has taught us that no loss is more irreparable than that of time; we strive then to save it in every respect as much as possible. Thanks to this calculation, the desire of enjoying has replaced that of pleasing; what was called before a fortunate adventurer in gallantry exists no more; few successes are now known but those which have been purchased, or which circumstances put, without trouble, in your reach. The number of female candidates has so increased that no one can complain of scarcity. They have arrived at such precision in calculating the value of cares, attentions, and other testimonies of politeness, that it would be quite ridiculous to shew marked attentions to a woman, without a certainty, at all events without a hope, of speedily possessing her, and successfully publishing the good fortune. This would be no other than to assume the air of the old court, which we all know to be the very worst air in the world. The little attention and constraint which reign in the highest societies have introduced into the lowest a familiarity equally stupid and indecorous. Many of our courtisans have been raised by their fortune to a level with women of rank. Amuse-

ments, pleasures, extreme licence, every kind of seduction having attracted to their houses men of the first fashion, women of character find themselves reduced to the cruel alternative of either assuming the part of these dangerous enchantresses, or of seeing themselves utterly abandoned. What a stab inflicted on decency, particularly on the dignity of true love, on the amiable gallantry which stamped the manners of chivalry! By a necessary consequence of this new order of things, from the little time which we are compelled to bestow on the cares of gallantry, men are accustomed to live much in each others society. Thence the prodigious success which the establishment of clubs in the English fashion have met with; we see them spring up everywhere, the political, the military clubs, the saloon of the Italian Comedy, and of the arts, the chess club, and that of the Americans, &c. These are very numerous assemblies, composed of persons almost unacquainted, but who have consented to meet in the same place without incurring any mutual expenses of wit, attention, or complaisance; to give yourself no trouble, is, if I may be allowed the expression, the only sort of politeness vigorously imposed on these societies. You arrive there at your own hour, you depart at will; you may appear there without any kind of dress, in the figurative as well as in the natural sense of the word. There reigns in these assemblies an easy sort of equality, but totally without confidence, activity or interest. You may doubtless find there

some individuals whose conversation is amiable and instructive; but the general tone of which these circles are susceptible is not adapted to form or keep alive the social disposition.

Among the number of these new institutions there are but two to which women are admitted; the Olympic society and the Lyceum. The first is an association of free-masonry, whose almost exclusive object is amusement, there is music, there are occasional festivals; but, with the exception of days consecrated to this destination, the Olympus of the Palais Royal is positively deserted.

With regard to the Lyceum, it is an establishment which ought to be distinguished from all the others, and which appears to us worthy of the greatest encouragements; it is a real academy for women, and for people of the world, and might, I should think, successfully contribute to repair the innumerable errors of our public and private educations. The philosophical spirit which has presided over the present formation of the Lyceum, the sciences there professed, the choice of literary men commissioned to teach them, the interest which they have woven into their instructions, permit us to conceive the warmest hopes. No public college will bear a comparison with them, none of them fulfil the same object. Here grown men are addressed with more interest and liberty than children, and the desire of making the lessons agreeable to women, to people of the world, furnishes the lecturer with resources which he had never

found without such a motive; this mode of instruction becomes more useful and more necessary, more particularly in a country where the education of young people destined for military employments, for posts in the magistracy and at court, ends, if I may so say, at the point where it should begin. But some people object that only superficial knowledge and ridiculous pretensions will be derived from this institution—I grant it in the case of a large number of hearers, but by no means for all. Ridiculous pretensions! "All pretensions," as M. de Condorcet observed in a discourse with which he opened his mathematical lessons at the Lyceum, "all pretensions arise equally from the ignorance of the man, "and from the yet greater ignorance which he supposes in those before whom he displays them. "Thus I conceive that the best way of diminishing "the number of pretenders to excellence is that of "diminishing also the dupes whom they make, or "wish to make.——Superficial knowledge is superior to ignorance, provided this superficial "knowledge is widely expanded; it is only when "it is scarce that it can inspire the pride of setting "up for a judge, or the vanity of tricking ourselves "out in the little that we know. All real knowledge, "however trifling it may be, is useful when it is "common, and there is no degree of it which may "not become hurtful, while in the exclusive possession of a small number of men."——

We return to ordinary Clubs, and however agreeable this institution may be for idle men, or

for those who, either from fortune or circumstances, are not in a situation to see much of the world, it must be owned that one can hardly imagine an establishment more contrary to the interests of society, and above all to those of women. If our happy fickleness did not permit the hope that the fashion would not be eternal, surely there would be reason to fear, that the taste for clubs would cause insensibly a very marked revolution in the mind and in the manners of the nation; but the disposition which we possess from nature of growing weary of every thing, prevents us from being alarmed at our follies, as it ought also to moderate the vanity which we would draw from our most sublime projects.

In spite then of clubs, of whiskies, of jockeys, of black frocks, and of all that the magazine of Sykes offers of vases and charming furniture, we dare still predict, that we shall not become more English than we are become Chinese; however ingenious may be the measures taken by M. Bertin, to effect this admirable metamorphosis. To this I say Amen! so be it.

M. Garat on the Pyramids of Egypt.

Without intending to adopt the opinion of the author we think the manner in which it is discussed deserves the attention of our readers, and is calculated at the same time to convey to them some idea of the interesting instruction offered by the new establishment of the Lyceum.

"The climate most favoured by heaven has yet its inconveniences, and that of Egypt pays by great evils the miraculous fecundity of its lands. That sky, which lies near the tropic, is yet more ardent than the torrid zone in the other parts of the globe. Those frequent rains, those beneficent hurricanes, which every where temper and refresh the heated air of the tropics, in Egypt are utterly unknown. Hardly ever does a cloud interpose between the sun and the earth, and the rays of that fiery star, darted almost perpendicularly, concentrated and reflected by the two chains of mountains which follow the course of the Nile, form, from the centre of the Thebaid and the Heptanomid, as it were a vast burning mirror which spreads at a distance flames and conflagration; and while the fire pursues you every where, the earth offers no shelter. Egypt is entirely destitute of large trees; she has none of those forests whose undulations are as it were the ventilators of the burning zones, whose lofty and shaded summits arrest the sun, and maintain an eternal freshness at their feet, while the conflagration rages at their heads. The earth, penetrated through its entire depth by the waters of the Nile, is fertilized by this raging heat; but living beings are consumed and devoured by it: there are moments in the year when the flocks and herds which feed in the enclosed plains of the Thebaid and Heptanomid, burned as in a barn which has caught fire, fill the air with their roaring, and precipitate themselves into the waters of the Nile, where they re-

main plunged night and day. The buffalo, the swine, the horse, the ox, there become almost amphibious; there are times when we can hardly conceive any other animated beings to exist in Egypt excepting fish. This it is that gave occasion to a Frenchman in Egypt, who wrote that singular work the *Tellimiad*, to conceive the idea of deducing the origin of all animals, even of man himself, from fish. Men indeed, and even women, live there very much in company with fishes in the waters of the Nile. Multitudes of children, spread over the banks of this river and the canals, swim across them and sport continually in the waters; young girls are also very expert at this exercise, and display in it as much courage as the men, and more grace. At the time of Herodotus and Thales, they were seen coming forth from the waters, surrounding in a circle the boats which ascended and descended the Nile, and accompanying them with songs, and we may attribute to this spectacle the origin of the charming fable of the Nereids..... Homer had seen it; the genius of Homer is in part composed of what nature offers to the view in Egypt. But this climate has something yet more terrible than its burning heat; it is a scourge from which the waters of the Nile do not offer a protection, and which frequently makes it impossible to seek in the river a refuge against the fires of heaven. Winds of the greatest violence rush from the sandy deserts of Africa and of Arabia with which Egypt is surrounded; in

an instant the heaven, the earth, all the atmosphere is covered with a sand, which appears red with fire, and which penetrates through the smallest interstices of walls and partitions. Houses afford no shelter, and frequently entire families are buried in their beds by these fiery torrents of sand; but one certain refuge remains against this scourge, and this is the entrails of the earth, and the inhabitants of Egypt, and in general of Africa, have ever sought for safety there. The Egyptian and the African have ever lived more beneath than above ground, and these subterraneous places, these dismal dwellings which appal our imagination, are the residences which they prefer, and their most delicious asylums. Through almost the whole extent of Africa the climate has rendered these habitations necessary and always agreeable. When Hanno sailed from Carthage to make discoveries in the seas, like Cook in our days, on coasting the Western side of Africa, by night he always beheld fires lighted, he heard joyous strains, the sound of instruments and dancing; by day, when the sun re-appeared in heaven, all again was silence; he neither saw nor heard a human being; one would have pronounced the whole of that coast of Africa to be a desert, given up to the sands and waves of the sea. All the people on that side of the Peninsula had fled to caverns and subterraneous abodes. At the opposite extremity, on the Eastern coast, we have seen the Ethiopian Icthyophagi remain wholly lost in their stupid ignorance unless when

roused from it to seek and choose for themselves caverns impenetrable to the sun; we have seen them build, with sea-moss and sand from their river-banks, artificial rocks whose form resembled that of a rude pyramid. Over the whole of Upper Ethiopia, above and at the borders of the cataracts, the country is laid open by deep excavations which the inhabitants have hollowed for the purpose of fixing their residence within them. There it is, that the Ethiopian priests were accustomed to offer up their sacrifices and initiations, and some of them passed their life under-ground without beholding that sky, that sun, and those stars which they adored. The Ethiopians, when they emigrated from Egypt preserved their taste for these dwellings, which became even more necessary to them among the calcareous rocks of Arabia and Lybia. Thebes renowned for its hundred gates began with being a subterraneous city; the first street at Thebes, and its first houses were hollowed out in parallel rocks to the right and left of that capital. What were termed the tombs of the Theban kings, were, if I may use the expression, subterraneous countries in which an entire people was enabled to spread itself abroad, and in which were all the conveniences and ornaments of market-places, galleries, peristiles, saloons, palaces, and temples. I do not hesitate to believe that these excavations were the tombs of the kings; but I have an equal regard for history, from whence I learn that the first Theban kings resided

within them, and we should endeavour to reconcile ourselves to the idea, that the same houses lodged frequently together the living and the dead. A number of temples in Egypt were scooped out of the rock.... See in Diodorus Siculus the detailed description of the tomb of Osimander, you will there find vestibules and peristiles, where a whole city is capable of extending itself under shelter from the fires of the sun; squares in which a whole people could assemble, a temple of justice in which a nation could be judged, palaces where kings might be the judges, a library where they might become enlightened, and temples in which they and their subjects might adore the gods. Such are the just notions presented to us by his description, and which the appellation of tombs has rendered obscure. But in truth we may plainly see that many other edifices of Egypt, which bore different names, resembled the tomb of Osimander: such among others was the labyrinth, the most famous of Egyptian structures, which are all famous, and of which Herodotus speaks from having seen, and entered it. This labyrinth was appropriated to the assemblies of kings when they were to the number of twelve in Egypt, to assemblies of priests and of the nation when they deliberated on public concerns. What is remarkable, is, that the labyrinth, whose apartments above ground were innumerable, had the same number beneath. Herodotus wished to penetrate them, his conductors opposed his desire, and all that he could learn,

was, that in those vast caverns were the sacred crocodiles, and the sepulchres of the kings who had built the labyrinth," &c.

From all these considerations, put together, M. Garat concludes that these immense dwellings were destined, in fact, to shelter the people in public ceremonies, whether political or religious, from the devouring fires of the sun, and from those whirlwinds of burning sands which penetrated into the interior of all the other edifices.

" More than half, he adds, of the pyramids was subterraneous, and even that part which rose to the height of six hundred feet, formed of immense rocks from thirty to forty feet in thickness, almost hermetically sealed in the whole circumference, was yet, if I may so say, a cavern elevated in the air. We there find some perforations, which were no doubt intended to renew the air of the pyramid in those seasons and hours when that of Egypt was less heated. There it was "that the priests of Egypt were accustomed to retire to meditate on their gods, and add to their number, and take measures against the usurpations of some of their sovereigns; and no doubt for the purpose of celebrating those famous mysteries, those initiations in which they exposed to so many trials, strangers who wished to become acquainted with Egyptian wisdom. These dark dwellings were very well calculated to carry terror into the soul of the candidates. These edifices which were elevated so high and descended to such a depth, were

admirably contrived to persuade the initiated that he was raised to heaven, or precipitated to hell. Those long channels, those galleries in which the report of a pistol is repeated in a series of echoes twenty times, like the report of a cannon, were wonderfully constructed to make the initiated hear the reverberations of thunder; in one word, every thing persuades me that these pyramids were applied to a great number of uses in society, as well as all edifices of the same kind.... There were two Egypts, the one above, the other below ground, and the pyramids partook of the one and the other; they descended beneath the earth, they were elevated in the air, but in both cases, they afforded to the Egyptians a retreat against the two great scourges of their climate, the burning aridity of the heavens, and the whirlwinds of scorching sand. I know not whether this explanation will be approved, but it is taken from the nature of the climate, the general style of Egyptian architecture, from their taste, or rather from their passion for subterraneous habitations, from the rites of their religion, from all that history recounts to us of the prodigies of their initiation. Other conjectures attribute these grand edifices to a trifling cause; my conjecture attributes them to all the causes which can most powerfully influence a whole nation."

Death of Sacchini.

Antonio-Maria-Gaspard Sacchini, born at Naples in 1734, one of the greatest musicians who

have reflected honour on Italy, died at Paris, October 8. At ten years of age he entered one of those colleges established at Naples and at Venice under the name of conservatories, where that crowd of virtuosi and composers are formed, who, destined to spread over all Europe the glory of an art born, like all others, in the bosom of the beauteous Italy, are serviceable to the interests of their country, by the considerable sums which they yearly carry home.

Sacchini employed the first years of his studies, in the conservatory of Loretto, in perfecting himself on the violin. He acquired an extraordinary skill on that instrument, and it was perhaps to this first success, that he was indebted afterwards for the happy facility of giving to the instrumental part of his compositions those brilliant, ingenious, and varied designs by which they are distinguished. Nature however invited M. Sacchini to a talent more uncommon than that of execution. One of the greatest masters of counter-point that ever existed in Italy, who was to be numbered with the Pergolesis, Piccinis, Guglielmis, Traettas, &c. the celebrated Durante, heard some airs that Sacchini had composed in his leisure hours. Strong character, new thoughts, which required only to be embellished by those regular forms never attainable but by good principles, led that great man to augur the perfection which such a pupil would attain; in consequence he made him give up the violin to direct his attention solely to the study of

counter-point. Sacchini soon became acquainted with its elements, and, what is more difficult, he caught with yet greater readiness, the design, the succession, the progressive connexion of musical phrases, qualities which alone constitute the elegance of song and purity of harmony. Sacchini left the conservatory in 1750, and gave, in 1756, at Naples, a comic opera, his first work, whose success announced those which he was destined to obtain in the serious style, a style to which his taste, and his personal character appeared to attach him from choice. He composed successively, for the theatres of Rome, of Naples, and of Venice, the operas of *Semiramide, l'Artaserse, il Cid, l'Andromaca, il Creso, l'Ezio, l'Olympiade, l'Armida, l'Adriano,* &c. He was invited to Brunswick, a court in those days celebrated for the splendor of its festivals, and the successes which he there met with during four years, were the same as those which he had obtained in Italy. The love of his country recalled him to Venice; he was there master of the conservatory of the *Ospidalletto.* In this school designed exclusively for the education of young girls, Sacchini developed that talent which he owed to the lessons of Durante, by the manner in which he treated the chorusses of more than thirty oratorios, which he composed, and taught this conservatory to execute; it is in possession of them to this day. Sacchini then quitted Venice for Rome; in that city he met the celebrated singer Guarducci, who was returning

from London; he it was who engaged Sacchini to go to that country, which pays exorbitantly for those arts it affects to admire. Sacchini remained twelve years in England; he there composed, among other operas, those of *Tamerlane*, *Antigono*, *Perseo*, *Montezuma*, *il Creso*, *l'Erifile*, &c.; and these are the compositions which the proximity of the country he then inhabited introduced to the notice of the French. He earnestly desired to visit that country of the fine arts, in which, it is true, none of them were born, but where they are idolized, and, with the exception of music, brought to perfection. Sacchini made a little excursion to Paris, in 1780; there he met Piccini the companion and rival of his successes in Italy; he saw at Paris that celebrated composer, then at war with the partisans of Gluck, who still pertinaciously disputed his claims to applause from *Roland*, *Atis*, and *Iphigénie en Tauride*. Piccini engaged his countrymen to try his talents, on our lyric theatre; to attach this great talent to his new country, and support the cause which he defended with all the strength of this new combatant, he introduced him to a Queen who is ever disposed to protect an art to which she herself condescends, at times, to bestow all the charm which beauty and the graces can inspire. Sacchini, far more affected by the kindness with which her Majesty condescended to receive him, than by a pension of 6,000 livres which she liberally secured to him, consented to leave London for Paris. There he soon gave his

opera of *Renaud.* The success of that work, doubtful at the three first representations, ended by a decided triumph. Piccini triumphed: he saw in the success of his friend's first composition another argument in favour of Italian music, and could not foresee that the *Gluckists* would discover, in the success of Sacchini, a mode of avenging themselves on his own successes. He knew not yet that the men of letters who had declared against him, had principles which would never permit them to pardon him, for having destroyed, by facts, their assertions against the process of Italian music, although Gluck himself had frequently employed the same modes, and with the greatest success, in his best compositions. This justly celebrated man, to whom the revolution, which he has brought about on our lyric theatre, assures a glory which we should to no purpose contest, had at that time been attacked with several fits of apoplexy; his partisans could no longer expect from him any new compositions, which were so necessary to re-awaken public attention, which began to be a little tired of admiring his master-pieces. *Roland, Atis, Iphigénie en Tauride,* daily became more popular; the worship paid to Gluck ceased to be exclusive, and Piccini was menacing his calumniators with the opera of Dido. Such repeated successes proved too much against the doctrine of those who in an authoritative manner had pronounced that the Italian music was not and could not be dramatic; they thought the honour of their opinion, more than that of Gluck, con-

cerned in opposing to the rising success of his rival, a man whose talent might offer to his sect objects of comparison, and more particularly new resources for railing and objection. This man they could not find among the national composers; the success of *Renaud* which had then justified the great reputation of Sacchini, had a far greater influence than their own taste in presenting them with arms against Piccini. Sacchini was soon surrounded with admirers. His weak mind, rather susceptible than jealous, permitted itself to be convinced that his countryman, the friend of his youth, who had invited him to France, and determined him to reside there, was envious of his successes, and sought to depress him; from that moment he estranged himself from Piccini. To this schism we are indebted for a third sect, that of the Sacchinists, a sort of tamed Gluckists, who only entirely belong to this sect by their jealousy of Piccini. Thus it is that in circumstances far less important, without doubt, the different factions which divide an empire, never cordially unite except in their hatred against that faction which threatens to obtain the superiority; but those little manœuvres, the fruit of that party spirit, which, from the days of Charlemagne to our own times, has divided the French on the kind of music which is analogous to their language, without ever teaching them to compose good music, were absolutely useless to the merit of *Climène* and *Dardanus*, brought on by Sacchini to succeed his *Renaud*. He had the weakness to think of

propping their success by the credit of the cabal, and they the folly to believe that its success was due to their influence. But this imbecility of character should by no means extinguish the glory which M. Sacchini has gained by the three works composed for our lyric theatre. His opera of Œdipus at Colonna, represented only on the theatre of the Court, and which is impatiently expected on that of the capital, must make us yet more regret this great man. He was engaged in a new work, which he had not entirely finished, when death deprived us of him.

M. Sacchini died of the gout in his stomach, which was long treated as a malignant fever. How have we to regret that the ignorance of a physician has deprived us of a talent so superior when it had attained to its utmost energy! We will not try to make the eulogy of a man whom the different theatres, enriched by his productions, will long lament. It belongs to great masters in the art to praise with discrimination those who, like themselves, have added to its glory. This Piccini has accomplished in his eulogy of Sacchini, which he published in the *Journal de Paris* some days after his death. After having called the public attention to the manner in which Sacchini excelled in rondos, he adds, " that it was on the opera of London that " he had the opportunity of developing all the re- " sources of his art, and all the riches of his ge- " nius in chorusses connected with the action, and " of the highest elevation; in those finished pieces

" of harmony and song, where the four parts are " so well disposed, where we discover no indolence, " where all tends to the same object, where we do " not find one single useless measure, where, in a " word, each part forms separately a song, so well " connected, so well modulated, that even, when " isolated, it becomes a master-piece.

" In all the productions that have come from " the pen of M. Sacchini we cannot too much ad- " mire that easy progress, that melodious song, that " character at one time serious, at another gay, bril- " liant, pathetic, amorous, melancholy, and always " well connected; this enchanting manner of con- " necting and linking together his musical phrases, " without once offending the ear, even in the most " violent transitions, which he employs so much " art to prepare and to resolve; that exact precision, " where you can neither add nor take away, and " where all is finished: lastly, the richness of his " accompaniments, so well distributed, adapted " with so much address as to do no violence to the " vocal part, which he always regarded as the " principal, and treated with as much grace as " grandeur."

What can we add to a definition so just and precise of the great talent of M. Sacchini! We will only remark that his person was above the middle size; that his figure was as noble as interesting; of a character habitually soft and tranquil, but which indicated a soul ardent, and devoured with passion. Love, that sentiment of

which all his works bear so lively an impression, exercised over him a despotic mastery. An inclination so imperious has sometimes damped his desire for labour and for glory, but he repaired these errors by that prodigious facility which distinguishes, in a particular manner, the masters of his school. Among many features of his life which might justify the truth of this observation, we will confine ourselves to calling to mind what happened to him at Milan. He had been invited there to compose the first opera. There he fell in love with the first singer; her charms effaced from his mind the object of his journey and his engagement with the manager of the Opera.

Some days before the opening of the theatre, he called on Sacchini, to settle with him the day of the first rehearsal of his opera. Sacchini avowed to him that he had not composed a note. We may easily imagine the despair of a man at a piece of negligence which threatened him with ruin; he fell into a sort of fury against the careless and amorous Sacchini; but the lady, in whose arms he had forgotten that he had an opera to compose, arrested the violence of the manager: "*Shut us up,*" she said to him, "*with two copyists, and I answer for it that Sacchini shall not stir from hence before his Opera is finished.*" In short, without being separated for an instant from his Armida, he set himself to compose with such rapidity that the two copyists could hardly keep pace with him; in a fortnight the opera was copied, learned by heart, and brought on

the stage; and this opera which is his Olympiade, is one of his most perfect works.

It may be easily imagined that an event so memorable as the assembling of the *Notables*, convened for the 29th of this month, at present engages the attention of every one. Good citizens, even those who had ventured to shew some prejudices against the character or views of the minister, now augur most favourably of them; they recognise in the intention which projected this measure one of the noblest impulses of the beneficent and patriotic soul of our young monarch. The sneerers who have imposed on themselves the melancholy law of believing neither in goodness nor virtue, are yet compelled to allow that the minister who conceived the plan could not have made a party-hit more happy, if not for the purpose of strengthening his credit, at least to give it more lustre, and secure to himself a more glorious retreat. Nothing but the grossest ignorance, the prejudices of party spirit, or the most determined mistrust could possibly witness with any pain the meeting of such an assembly. However this may be, it has been thought right to secure all opinions, by circulating the subjoined note, which, without having the authenticity of a public document, has, doubtless, been approved by government.

" The assembly of the Notables of the kingdom, which had not been convoked for nearly two centuries, will be a very interesting event for France. The king does not summon them to ob-

tain succours in money; on the contrary, he acts as a beneficent father who wishes to consult his people on a vast and wise plan, projected for the happiness of the nation. Among the results of this plan, we may reckon, first, the abolition of more than fifty millions of imposts on the poorest class of the people; secondly, greater equality in contribution to the state; thirdly, a considerable diminution in the expenses of tax-gathering; fourthly, the abolition of discouragements to industry, and rights without end with which the kingdom is over-burthened, as well as a great amelioration in the excise on salt.

"From this assembly will result likewise a national sanction of the public debt. The sketch which will be presented, will offer a proportion between the receipt and the expense, although to the latter must be put down the reimbursement of sixty millions annually, which, in twenty years, will no longer exist, as also of annuities, the extinction of which may be effected by an equal sum in the same lapse of time. This event will be one of the noblest and most affecting in the reign of our monarch, and will display the sagacity and superiority of his minister of finances."

However consolatory may be the hopes which this view of affairs offers to the wishes of the nation, we should shew ourselves very little acquainted with the people, if we imagined that these expectations could repress that malignant gaiety which sports alike with the public happiness and misery. In

France, the best of kings would not be less exposed to its sarcasms than the worst of tyrants. Couplets, sneers, witticisms of every kind, are, at all seasons, the baubles of this childish people. Do it a good or an injury, to laugh is a matter of primary necessity. The Frenchman swears, and complains, and forgets all in some merry ballad.

Have we not seen placards, in which it is announced that the *grand company of M. de Calonne will give, on the 29th, the first representation of False Appearances, or Debts and Mistakes?* Have we not seen that, if the actors hesitated, the author himself would prompt them? Did they not say, that one of the most curious objects of the approaching assembly would be a discourse of the Duke de Chabot, on Economy, translated into French, by the Duke de Laval. The Duke de Chabot is known in France for the profusion of his expenses; the Duke de Laval for a jargon very original, because, with much wit, his ideas and expressions do not go hand in hand; and he therefore is noted for making the most ridiculous blunders. The society of Madame de la Vallière is accustomed to give him annually, as a new year's gift, some handsome presents in needlework. Did not some person send him, last year, a table, in the middle of which are two or three large cats, surrounded by animals of every kind, decorated with mitres, with ribbands, with surplices, and engaged in making broth? Some one wrote the other day to the Duchess d'Enville: "What think you of the assembly of Nota-

bles?" Her answer was: "For my part I do not augur well of a choice which is not my own." These words are taken from *False Magic.*

They represented lately, at Versailles, at the theatre of the city, the play of *King Theodore,* an opera of Paësiello, which the privileges of the Royal Academy of Music do not permit us to see at Paris. At the moment when Theodore expresses so naturally his distress, and the embarrassments of his situation, a voice from the pit exclaimed aloud to him: *Why do you not assemble the Notables?* Some persons wished to take the man into custody, who had dared to utter so indecent a raillery; but the Queen, who was present at the spectacle, had the wisdom and goodness to prevent their giving more consequence or attention to such an impertinence, by punishing it as it deserved.

Every day we hear some new witticism of this kind related; but these follies become harmless from their frequency. The good that is intended, progressively advances; the nation does not lose its habit of laughing, and, whether with or without reason, laughter is always good for something.

Fragment of a letter from the late M. Diderot to his friend Mademoiselle Voland.

From Grand-Val (a country-house of the Baron d'Holbach), 23d October, 1760.

At about seven o'clock the company sat down to cards, and M. Le Roi, Grimm, the Abbé Galiani, and myself, amused ourselves with talking.

Oh, for this once, I will give you an insight into the mind of the Abbé, whom, perhaps, you have only hitherto considered as an entertaining companion. He is more than that.

A discussion took place between Grimm and Le Roi on the genius which creates, and the method which arranges. Grimm detests method: he calls it the pedantry of letters: those who can only arrange would do as well to let their pens lie still; those who cannot gain information but from subjects arranged in order, had better remain in ignorance.—But it is method which sets off a good idea—And which spoils it too.—Without it we should not derive instruction from any thing.—But by incurring great fatigue, and that would be only so much the better.—Why should so many people know more than their trade?—They said a number of things which I omit to mention, and would have continued to discuss the point if the Abbé Galiani had not interrupted them as follows:

My friends, I remember a fable, listen to it: you may perhaps think it rather long, but it will not tire you.

One day, in the middle of a forest, there arose a dispute between a nightingale and a cuckoo, relative to their respective modes of singing. Each extolled his own talent.—"What bird," said the cuckoo, "has so easy, so simple, so natural, and so measured a song as myself?"—"What bird," said the nightingale, "has a note more sweet, more varied, more brilliant, more airy, more affecting, than myself?"

The Cuckoo. "I say but little, but that little has weight and order, and is easily remembered."

The Nightingale. "I love to speak, but I am ever new, and never tire my hearers. I enchant the forests; the cuckoo saddens them: he is so attached to the lesson of his mother, that he dare not venture a single turn which he has not learned from her. For myself, I know not the use of a master; I laugh at rules, and am never so much admired as when I infringe them. How can his tiresome *method* be compared with my happy deviations from all *method*?"

The cuckoo strove frequently to interrupt the nightingale; but nightingales sing for ever, and never listen; this is one of their faults. Our bird, led on by his ideas, followed them with rapidity, without attending to the answers of his rival. Nevertheless, after some assertions and contradictions, they agreed to refer their dispute to the judgment of a third animal. But where is a third to be found, of equal impartiality and skill, who shall decide on their merits? It is difficult to select a good judge. They look for one in every direction.

They were crossing a meadow, when they happened to perceive an ass, one of the gravest and most solemn of his species. Ever since the creation, not an ass had been seen whose ears were so long. Ah! said the cuckoo, we are really too fortunate; ours is a dispute which has a reference to ears, there is our judge; he was made expressly for us.

The ass was busily browzing; little did he think that one day he should be called on to decide on musical pretensions; but Providence amuses itself in divers ways. Our two birds descend before him, compliment him on his gravity and judgment, explain to him the subject of their dispute, and entreat him very humbly to hear them and decide. But the ass turning away lazily his heavy head, and not losing a single bite, made them a sign with his ears that he was hungry, and that he does not on this day hold his bed of justice. The birds insist; the ass continues to browze; by browzing, his appetite is appeased. Some trees were planted on the skirt of the meadow. Well! said he, go thither, I will betake myself to the spot. You will sing, I will digest, listen, and then give you my opinion. The ass follows them with the air of a president in a round bonnet, traversing the halls of a court of justice; he arrives, stretches himself on the earth, and says: begin, the court listens to you.

The cuckoo then spoke: my lord, not a word of my reasonings is to be lost. Catch the character of my voice, and particularly have the goodness to observe its artifice and method; then puffing out his throat, and flapping each time with his wings, he sang; cuckoo, cuckookoo, cuckoo, cuckookoo, cuckoo; and having combined these notes in every possible manner, he was silent.

Then the nightingale, without preface, opens his voice, ventures into the boldest modulations, falls into strains the newest and most exquisite, into

cadences and swells that no breath could follow; one while the listener heard the sounds descend and murmur at the bottom of his throat, as the river wave loses itself among the flints; then the voice rose, was gradually reinforced, filling the extent of the air, and remained as it were suspended; it was by turns sweet, playful, brilliant, pathetic, and painted to the life every character that it assumed; but his style was not made for all the world.

Carried away by his enthusiasm, he was yet singing; but the ass, who had already frequently yawned, stopped him, and said; I conceive that, what you have been singing is mighty fine, but not a syllable of it do I comprehend; it appears to me, whimsical, confused, unconnected; perhaps you are more learned than your rival, but he is more methodical than you, and I am for method.

Then the Abbé, addressing himself to M. Le Roy, and pointing to Grimm, "There," said he, "is the nightingale, you are the cuckoo, and I am the ass who decides the cause in your favour. Good night."

The tales of the Abbé are good, but he acts them in a superior manner; we cannot forbear laughing. You would have laughed heartily at seeing him stretch out his neck in the air, and mimic the high note of the nightingale, puff out his chest, and assume the hoarse note of the cuckoo, prick up his ears, and imitate the clumsy and stupid gravity of the ass, and all that naturally and without the least effort. He is pantomime from head to foot.

M. Le Roi thought that the best thing he could do was to praise the fable, and laugh at it.

March, 1787.

Philosophical Tour to England, in the Years 1783 and 1784, in the form of Letters. Two Vol. in-8vo.

Poetical sketches of the aspect of mountains; detailed notices of the most remarkable buildings in London and its environs; philosophical views of the government, manners and customs of the country, its manufactures, commerce and finances; critical observations on the present state of letters and the arts in England; curious portraits, and shades of national character in the different states and situations of life, moral tales, sentimental anecdotes in the manner of Sterne; minute information on the high roads, gates, and inns, which must be of great utility to travellers;—there is no species of information which these two volumes do not contain. But that which is most remarkable is the union of two advantages which until this time were considered as incompatible, much manner in the style, sometimes even ridiculous affectation, together with a great fund of candour and truth in the ideas and the sentiments. The author, whom we do not personally know, but who, after reading his book, we must allow to possess much wit and sensibility, has been seduced by the fancy of imitating a model which suited neithdr the nature of his talent nor the genius of his language. If, how-

ever, we pardon him his new words, and sentimental conceits, you will find in his manner of observing men and things, much discernment, interest, and very frequently a truth of observation at once natural and simple.

All that we have been able to learn of the author is, that he is a M. de Laeoste, and that he travelled in England in the suite of the Duke de Chaulnes, of whom he had doubtless strong reason to complain, since there are many passages in the book wherein this nobleman is very roughly handled; I send you the last sketches of him with which he has chosen to present the reader.

"In the same hotel at Dover, lodged a great man both in name and arms. This man, too well known, had brought from London a girl carried off from some chairmen of Covent Garden; the caprices between two lovers of this character cannot be among those amiable little disputes which are so many links in a chain of flowers.—At the conclusion of one of these frolics, a kick in the stomach having thrown down the fugitive damsel, that proud beauty raises herself, seizes a broom, and with an arm kept in exercise under the porticoes and beer cellars of her quarter, falls upon her august lover. A man of quality, a peer of France, to caper under a broomstick was hardly to be endured; he runs to his pistols, the princess alarmed flies away, leaps down the staircase, and gets into the street crying for "help;" her lover with bewildered eye, mouth open and foaming, tongue paralysed, pursues her

with a pistol in his hand, and without opposition reaches the door; but, oh! fatal reverse of fortune! some sailors who were assembled and talking before the inn are indignant at seeing a man pursue a feeble being without defence; one of them leaves the group, comes across the stranger, and offers him combat. The Duke looks at him, calculates his force, and not deeming the challenge advantageous to himself, presents his pistol. This determination was rather ducal; the Englishman, who did not perceive any thing in him above a man, believes himself disengaged from the laws of duelling, puts aside the fire-arm with the back of his arm held up for his defence, and with a kick in the stomach, sends into the gutter the heavy mass of his adversary. The young girl had time to disappear; the conqueror seeks her with his eyes, cannot find her, looks coolly on the vanquished, who tumbles in the mud, and then slowly joins the circle which he had left. The grandee having nothing further to fear than the hisses of the spectators, who notwithstanding did not deign to attend his retreat, picked up his pistol, his false toupee, and counterfeit teeth, reentered his inn, went up into his apartment, passing before several groups of English who smiled disdainfully, and of French who cast down their eyes, humiliated at the ignominy with which he had covered their countrymen."

Instead of here making a collection of observations by our new traveller, which would lose much of their value if detached from the sort of picture

which serves to set them off, and at least gives them the greatest interest, we prefer recalling to our readers an abridgment of the reflections of the baron d'Holbach on England, such as we have found it in a letter to one of his best friends.

" Think not" (says that friend,) " that the division of property is unequal only in France. There are two hundred English noblemen who possess each six, seven, eight, nine, up to eighteen hundred thousand livres *per annum*; a numerous clergy which possesses, like our own, a quarter of the property of the State, but contributes in proportion to the public charges, which ours does not; merchants of an exorbitant opulence; judge how little remains to the other citizens. The monarch appears to have his hands free to do good, and bound to restrain him from doing evil, but he is in reality as much, and yet more the master of all, than any other sovereign. In other countries, the court commands and forces obedience; in England, it corrupts and does what it pleases, and the corruption of subjects is perhaps in the long run yet worse than tyranny. There is no public education; the colleges, sumptuous buildings, which may be compared with our Palace of the Thuilleries, are filled by rich idlers, who sleep and lounge during one part of the day, and employ the other in grossly fashioning some dull apprentice ministers. The gold which flows in upon the capital, from the provinces and from all the countries in the globe, raises manual labour to a very high price, encourages smuggling,

and injures the manufactures. Whether from the effect of climate, or of strong beer and liquors, of gross food, of continual mists, of the smoak from coal which constantly surrounds them, the people are heavy and melancholy. The gardens are cut into close winding walks; everywhere you trace the character of a people who wish to be alone. In one part you find a Gothic temple, in another a grotto, a Chinese room, ruins, obelisks, tombs. A rich individual is planting a large track with cypresses; he has arranged between these trees the busts of philosophers, sepulchral urns, antique marbles on which we read, *Diis Manibus*; what the baron styles a Roman burial-ground, this individual calls an Elysium. But that which more than all characterises the national gloom, is their manner of passing their time in those sumptuous edifices erected to pleasure. You might there hear a mouse creep; a hundred women, starch, and silent, walk round an orchestra built in the middle, where most delightful music is played. The baron compares these windings to the seven processions of the Egyptians around the Mausoleum of Osiris. They have public gardens which are but little frequented; in return, the people are not less crowded together in the streets than the tombs are in Westminster Abbey; a celebrated building where are monuments to all the illustrious men of the nation. It was a charming and acute observation of our friend Garrick, *London is good for the English, but Paris for all the world.* When the baron

paid a visit to this celebrated actor, he conducted him to the border of the Thames, beneath a sort of grot, where he found a cupola raised on columns of rich marble, and, under it, the statue of Shakespeare in white marble; "behold," said he, "the tribute of gratitude which I owe to a man who has been the cause of my distinction, my fortune, and my talents." . . The Englishman gambles; he gambles for immense sums; he plays without speaking, and loses without complaining. He exhausts in a moment all the resources of life; nothing is more common than to find a man of thirty become insensible to riches, to the table, to women, to study, and even to beneficence. Satiety cloys them in the midst of pleasure and leads them to the Thames, unless they prefer the pistol, &c."

After this, see how little two travellers agree. Helvetius returned from England mad with English notions. The baron has returned quite undeceived.

April 1787.

Anecdote extracted from the Letters of Diderot to Mademoiselle Voland, in 1760.

Some one relates to us, I think it is Doctor Gati, the following anecdote. You must know that the senators of Venice are the most unfortunate of slaves to their own greatness; they cannot talk with a foreigner without risk of losing their lives, unless they formally accuse themselves, and say that they have accidentally met a Frenchman, an Eng-

lishman, a German, to whom they have spoken. It is a capital crime to enter into the house of an ambassador, from whatever court he may be deputed. A senator happened to be in love with a woman of his own rank, who received his addresses. Every night, almost at midnight, he went out, wrapped up in his cloak, alone, without even a single attendant, and hastened to pass one or two hours with her. To reach her house, he was compelled to make a large circuit, or to pass through the hotel of the French ambassador; love is blind to danger, and successful love counts every lost moment. Our amorous senator did not hesitate to take the shortest way; he frequently passed through the house of the French ambassador; he was at length detected, denounced, and taken. He is interrogated: with a word he might tarnish the honour and expose the life of her whom he loved, and preserve his own. He was silent, and was beheaded. This is heroic; but was the lady, whom he loved, justified also in keeping silence?

Copy of a Letter from the Prince de Ligne to Baron de Grimm.

Moscow, July 3, 1787.

"You are very much beloved, my dear Baron; you are much talked of, but does any one write to you? Catharine, the great *Emperor* (for she will make posterity commit a grammatical error), has not perhaps time to write. Perhaps these little details which I have just dic-

tated will give you an idea, although a very faint one, of what we have seen; it is *indignation that dictates* the account; for I am indignant to observe the low jealousy which in Europe is every where conceived against Russia. I could wish to give a lesson to that small part of Europe which endeavours to dishonour the larger part; if it would take the trouble of travelling, it would discover where lies the greatest barbarism. It is extraordinary that the Graces should have leaped over our sacred empire with feet conjoined, to come from Paris and establish themselves at Moscow, and two hundred wersts further yet, where we have found charming women, attired in the best taste, dancing, singing, and loving, perhaps, like angels.

"The emperor has been very agreeable during the three weeks that he has passed with us. The conversations of two persons, who have sixty millions of subjects, and eight hundred thousand soldiers, must have been interesting in a carriage. I availed myself of it by interrupting them frequently by some nonsense, at which I was the first to laugh myself, and then the others joined with me in the laugh, for we have always enjoyed that liberty which alone constitutes the charm of society; and you know the simple style of that of the Empress, whom a mere nothing diverts, and who never ascends to the elevation of the sublime but when grand objects demand it.

"Really, Baron, we must return here together: this will procure me a more favourable re-

ception. Not that you are under the necessity of putting the Empress in mind of all your amiableness; for when absent she sees you, but she would be very happy to add, present, I find him. You will make some delightful acquaintances; M. de Mómonoff, for instance, is a subject of great hope, he is full of wit, of diverting manners, and of knowledge. You imagine the gaiety which the Comte de Ségur has infused into the whole journey. I am quite in despair that it is almost ended.

"I have built a temple, dedicated to the Empress by an inscription, near a rock, on which the Temple of Iphigenia stood; and I have erected an altar to friendship, as a tribute to Prince Potemkin, in the midst of the finest and largest fruit trees that I ever saw, on the border of the sea, where all the mountain torrents unite. This little estate, which the Empress has given to me, is called *Parthenizza*, or the Cape of the Virgin, and is inhabited by fifty-six Tartar families, who are not so much Tartars as the goddesses and kings who used to require cruel sacrifices, as all the world knows. I know no situation more delicious; I might say, with reason,

"'In old Idalia's fortunate retreat,
"'Where Europe's plains and happy Asia meet.'

For thence we discern the mountains of Natolia. It is rather singular, that when I was on the coast of the Black Sea, in perfect tranquillity, and living in the midst of infidels, I learned that the faithful subjects of the House of Austria had revolted on

the borders of the ocean. I hardly expected more security in my estates on the Euxine Sea, than in those of Flanders.

"Would you have the kindness to send this parcel to its address, and to receive the assurances of the distinguished consideration which I entertain for you, jointly with all those who know or have heard you mentioned; permit me also to participate with your friends the tender attachment which you so readily inspire, and with which I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) THE PRINCE DE LIGNE.

Moscow, July 3, 1787 (new style).

It is two months on this day since we departed from Kiovia, and we are all just arrived here in good health from a journey the most interesting, the most triumphal, and most magnificent that was ever performed, without the least mal-adventure, or the smallest accident. I cannot refuse myself the pleasure of acknowledging how much we have been amused with the papers which have been so good as to honour us with their attention. To raise the spirits of so many well-intentioned persons, I will tell them, that, after a delightful navigation on the Borysthenes, we have found ports, armies, and fleets, in the most brilliant condition; that Cherson and Sebastopolis surpass all attempts to describe them, and that every day was marked by some extraordinary event; sometimes it was the manœuvring of seventy squadrons of regular

troops, in superb array, who charged in line of battle; sometimes a cloud of Cossacks, who exercised around us in their manner; sometimes the Tartars of the Crimea, who lately rebelled against their Khan Sahin-Guerai, because he wished to convert them into regiments, had formed corps of their own accord to come and meet the Empress. The sort of deserts which we had to traverse for two or three days at the places from whence her Imperial Majesty had driven the Nogai and Zaporavian Tartars, who, about ten years ago, ravaged or menaced the empire, were adorned with magnificent tents for dining and sleeping, and these encampments of Asiatic pomp, with the air of festival which, by land and water, has every where followed us, presented the most martial spectacle. Let not these deserts alarm the well-intentioned, such as the gazetteers of the Lower Rhine, of Leyden, the Courier de l'Europe, &c.; they will soon be covered with wood, and with villages. They are already building military villages, which, from being the habitations of regiments, will soon become those of peasants, who will establish themselves there on account of the fertility of the soil. If these gentlemen learn that in every municipal city the Empress has left presents worth more than a hundred thousand crowns, and that every resting day was marked by donations, balls, fire-works, and illuminations, to the extent of two or three leagues around, they will no doubt be alarmed for the finances of the empire. Unhap-

pily, they are in a most flourishing state; and the national bank, being under the direction of Count Andrew Schuvaloff, a man whose capacity and knowledge are an inexhaustible source of advantage to the sovereign and the country, ought to give them more confidence. If, from motives of humanity, they are disturbed for the happiness of the subjects, let them know that they are no farther slaves than in not possessing the power of doing harm to themselves and to others, but at perfect liberty to enrich themselves, which they often accomplish, and which we may witness by the richness of different costumes in the provinces we travelled over. As for foreign affairs, I could wish to refer the well-intentioned to the Empress herself; she laboured every day on her journey, in the morning with Count Bezborodkow, a minister of the greatest merit; and let them know, besides this, that the Prince Potemkin, a man of the most extraordinary genius, endowed with a mind the most comprehensive, formed to act on the largest theatre, perfectly seconds the views of the Empress or anticipates them, whether in capacity of head of the war-department, or as governor of many provinces. The Empress, who is not afraid that people will accuse her of being governed by others, confers on him and on every one whom she employs, all possible confidence and authority. She only prevents people from doing harm. She justifies her magnificence by saying, that to give money is the surest mode of receiving it, and that it is her duty to recompense and en-

courage; her creation of employments in the provinces, she says, gives circulation to specie, raises fortunes, and obliges the nobles to live there, rather than come and crowd each other at Petersburgh and Moscow. She has expended a large sum of money in building two hundred and thirty-seven towns of stone, because, she says, that villages built of wood being frequently consumed by fire, the expense of rebuilding them is greater in the end. She has a superb fleet on the Black Sea, because Peter the First was very fond of the marine. Thus it is that she ever finds some modest excuse for all the great things which she performs. You can hardly conceive the happiness which all experience who are in her suite. We travelled fifteen leagues in the morning; we found, at the first relay, a breakfast at an elegant palace built of wood, and afterwards dinner at another. Fifteen leagues further was a larger palace, more beautiful, and furnished admirably for sleeping; nothing could be finer, unless it were in municipal cities, where the governor-generals have every where superb residences built of stone, with colonnades, and every other superb decoration. There are rich merchants in all the cities, with much commerce from Krementschuk, Kawrsk, Orel, Toula, to this place, and a surprising population, by whom the Empress is adored. In the statistical account, which is sometimes reported in the public papers, the males only are numbered, and in other countries all are taken into the computation. If the well-intentioned (for I only write for them)

think the Tauris an insignificant acquisition, let them be consoled by learning that after having traversed some spaces abandoned by Tartar families, who are now petitioning to return thither, you enter on a most rich and cultivated country; that there are superb forests on the mountains, that the coasts of the sea are fringed with cities in form of an amphitheatre, and all the valleys planted with vines, pomegranates, palm-trees, fig-trees, apricots and all sorts of fruits and rare plants of inestimable value. Let me add, that not only is it a pleasure to follow the Empress, and not only are her subjects happy, but I doubt not that the gazetteers, and those who give credit to them, must doubtless be happy in learning as much. They must I think feel eternally obliged to us for having satisfied them so far, and I can say, further, that they may promise on our part a recompence of a thousand louis to any person who can disprove one tittle of our statement; a statement which has been made wholly for their instruction, and must therefore prove to them that we have not been so careful of saving our time as our thousand louis.

Panegyric of Trajan by Pliny, which has been lately discovered. Translated from the Latin into Italian by Comte Alfieri d'Asti, and from the Italian into French by M. de S...t, of the Royal Academy at Florence. Pamphlet in-8vo. with this motto, taken from Tacitus: "The happiness "of those times is uncommon, in which you may

" think what you please, and speak what you " think."

We need not of course inform our readers, that this new panegyric has been found in no other place than in the head of Count Alfieri.* He is a writer already known by some tragedies, not deficient in elevation and in warmth, but written in a style which must be unpleasant to ears accustomed to the harmonious warble of the verses of Metastasio. The object of this new panegyric is to prove to the emperor Trajan, that the best determination to which he can come, for his glory and the happiness of his country, is to abdicate the supreme power. " I have not made the least eulogy (says the writer) of the great and brilliant actions by which you have signalized yourself; but it appears to me, Trajan, that I have silently offered you an eulogy more worthy of you, when I imagine you capable of the only action, the very first attempt of which would redound more to your honour, than the accomplishment of all the others."

There is no great depth of ideas in the means which the orator employs to determine his hero to

* Alfieri is a Piedmontese nobleman, who has given up to his sister the greater part of a large fortune, that he may expend the remainder agreeably to his fancy. His prevailing passions are verses and horses. We know that he has for some time been under the thraldom of the Countess of Albany. If we pay attention to this writer, it should seem that, in France and Italy, we have to this day, remained ignorant of the art of writing tragedy. We have conceited, that it should be written with tears; it should, on the contrary, be written with blood.

this sublime sacrifice, but some of these means appear to us presented in a happy manner.' "We ardently desire liberty, and this desire gives us a claim to its enjoyment. Do not imagine, that to the word liberty we attach any other idea than that of always obeying Trajan, that is to say, the laws of which he is the observer and defender."

And what was the result of this fine discourse? Here it is—"They say that Trajan and the senators were moved even to tears, that this circumstance did great honour to Pliny, but that Trajan preserved his imperial power, and that Rome, the senate, and Pliny himself remained enslaved."

This calls to my mind an answer of the King of Poland to Comte Rzewski, who said to him one day—*Sire; were I in your place, I would abdicate—You might have reasons for it; but believe me, my dear Count, however near a man may be to a throne, he never views it from below, as he would were he seated upon it.*

October, 1787.

In 1766, madame Feydeau de Brou, daughter to a keeper of the privy-seal of France, and abbess of the convent of Villancourt, at Abbeville, sent for the chevalier de la Barre, her nephew, a young officer, grandson of a general, whose father had squandered away his property. She lodged him on the outside of her convent. A person by name Belleval, lieutenant of a little jurisdiction of that town, was in love with the abbess, and

she was compelled, for the purpose of discouraging his addresses, to turn him out of her house. Belleval did not doubt but that her conduct proceeded from her having conceived an attachment for her nephew, and immediately devised a method of destroying the chevalier de la Barre. He knew that this young officer and a certain sieur d'Etallonde, who was hardly eighteen years of age, had passed before the host without taking off their hats; that some unknown persons had damaged a wooden crucifix placed on the bridge of Abbeville, and he resolved to avail himself of these circumstances for destroying his pretended rival. The bishop of Amiens, to whom he announced these facts, published admonitory addresses, and ordered a solemn procession in honour of the mutilated crucifix, which did not fail to inflame all the heads of his diocese. The accuser Belleval assembled at his house footmen, servant-girls, and working-people, to engage them to bear witness against the youth; but in defiance of all these insinuations, he obtained no deposition which could formally prove that these youths had been seen to mutilate *the blessed symbol of the salvation of mankind*; the only crime of which they were duly convicted, was the having sung some immoral songs, and spoken with too much delight of *Voltaire's Philosophical Dictionary*. The judges of Abbeville, nevertheless, conceived themselves bound to condemn them to have their tongues and wrists cut off, and to be burned by a slow fire. The sieur d'Etallonde escaped from punishment by flying

to Prussia, where the great Frederic received the unfortunate youth, and gave him a commission in his army. As for the chevalier de la Barre, who was already in prison, the parliament of Paris, which takes cognizance of all matters within the jurisdiction of Abbeville, confirmed his sentence, in opposition to ten of the most celebrated pleaders of Paris, who adduced proofs of his innocence. It only diminished, in some respect, the rigour of the punishment (if the ordinary and extraordinary fortune to which it condemned him, may not be said to aggravate it) by sentencing him to be beheaded before he was thrown into the flames. What is truly frightful in their last sentence is, that, of twenty-five judges who composed the chamber, fifteen voted, for a long time, for acquitting the unfortunate young man, and they only acceded to the opinion of the ten others from an observation then made, that, at a time when the parliament was attacking the Jesuits, it was of the first importance for the bishops to shew themselves the zealous supporters of a religion, whose ministers they found themselves compelled to arraign.—Thus it is to the bull *Unigenitus*, and to the weakness of Louis XIV. in giving his sanction to it, that we owe the unhappy quarrels which have troubled almost the whole reign of Louis XV.—that we owe the attempt made on the person of this king, and the assassination committed by the laws on the unfortunate Chevalier de La Barre.

This lamentable history forms the subject of

Angusta; a tragedy by Fabre d'Eglantine, which met with no success on the French theatre.

The Life of Saint Vincent de Paule, Institutor and Founder of the Priests of the Mission, and the Filles de la Charité. Paris, 2 vol. in-12, each vol. more than 500 pages.

If Saint Vincent de Paule has become the fashionable saint, since the panegyric of the Abbé de Maury, we apprehend, however, that the history of his life, in two large volumes, will frighten many readers. We here find some curious details, but involved in a prolix style, and defaced by numberless puerilities more suitable to our ancient legends; one of the most original is that perhaps of the inconsiderate zeal of the missionary Guérin.

On being told by some one, the evening before his departure, that he was going to get himself hanged in Barbary—*That*, said he, *is a trifle; I would not go if I thought to be quit so easily; I hope that God will grant me the favour of being impaled or of suffering something yet worse.* This doubtless, is mad enough; but hardly more absurd than the reflection of the Chevalier de Crussol, who, when looking at a steep declivity which it was necessary to climb over before mounting the breach, exclaimed, *who the d—l would choose to mount there, if he were not to gain some bullets by it?*

January, 1788.

France has deeply to regret, in the person of the Chevalier Gluck, deceased at Vienna, the 17th of November, 1787, a composer, whose name will mark an interesting epoch in the history of music. We do not wish here to recount either the revolution which the Chevalier Gluck has made on our lyric theatre, nor the unjust ridiculous quarrels of which he was either the real or ostensible cause: we will neither speak of his works nor of his successes; what eulogy of ours can equal the homage which M. Piccini has paid to the glory of this great man?

In a letter inserted in *the Journal de Paris*, after praising the author of *Alcestes* which could only be done by the author of Dido, M. Piccini proposes a subscription, not for the purpose of raising a bust to the Chevalier Gluck, as Rome and Florence have done to the celebrated Sacchini, but to found for ever, in honour of this composer, an annual concert, to be performed on the anniversary of his death, and composed wholly from his music. *This will transmit,* he says, *the spirit, the character, and execution of his compositions to the ages that shall succeed that epoch which has witnessed the birth of his grandest works, and as a model of the style and progress of dramatic music which it is proper to inculcate on young performers who are destined for the musical department at the theatre.*

This homage, which does equal honour to the great man who decrees it, and to him who is the

object of it, is a happy imitation of the veneration paid by England to the memory of Handel; but England did not yield him this homage until nearly half a century after his death; no absolute foundation guarantees its perpetuity, and the monument to the glory of Handel was not erected by his rival. This circumstance, so highly honourable to the character of M. Piccini, has equally astonished his own partisans, and those of the Chevalier Gluck. The one beheld it with pain, because they had sworn, and, what is worse, actually asserted the contrary in print, that Gluck was a great man, because his rival did not hesitate to grant him this title; the others have been irritated at seeing the most formidable of his rivals adorn the head of their idol with an immortal crown, which, in their eyes, his hand appeared to defile; such is party spirit. True it is, that these exaggerated sentiments only belonged to those persons who, in this musical contest (whose disputes were attended with so much importance and folly), have played a part more or less active. But all these heads of faction, some of whom had built their literary glory on these divisions, and others their most solid interest, affected to be ignorant that these two great men did each other equal justice at the very time when those who ventured to pass sentence on them refused them the qualities which most eminently distinguish their peculiar talent. Gluck admired the easy and undulating song of his rival, the brilliance of his style, the elegance and truth of his

expression; he had witnessed that his success in Italy surpassed that which he had himself obtained there, when, for the first time, he attempted, on the theatre of Naples, his new dramatic system, in the opera of Orpheus. The sagacity of M. Piccini's mind had enabled him equally to feel that the new point of view under which Gluck considered dramatic action adapted to the voice, the mixture of chorusses with the dialogue of the principal speakers, a greater rapidity in the progress of the piece, the development of sentiments to which the different situations of an interesting drama must give rise, must extend the boundaries of the art. He had never doubted but that, by submitting the process of that art to the principles of good tragedy, the greatest effects would result from it, an interest more lively, characters more varied, an expression more true and profound; that Gluck, in a word, recalled music to the sublime purpose to which the Greeks applied it on their theatre,—that theatre formed to be the model to all others.

But M. Piccini could hardly find in Italy a poet to answer the conceptions of his genius. The spectators of Naples and of Rome were too much accustomed to be contented simply with fine airs, and yet it was at the very instant of his being invited to France, that an Italian poet promised him an opera of *Iphigenia in Aulide*, written in conformity with the new principles. Unhappily for Piccini, long before his arrival in France, M. Marmontel had pronounced in the *Encyclopædia*, that the introduction of tragedy into the opera was impra-

ticable; that it would only make a confusion in the styles, which was destructive to the musical art; and that Quinault had left us the only models of poems suitable to that art. What was yet stronger than these assertions printed in the *Encyclopædia*, is, that M. Marmontel expected M. Piccini with seven or eight operas of this poet too much reviled by Boileau, and far too much extolled by the writers of this age. It was with the poem of Roland reduced to three acts that M. Piccini had to struggle against a rival who had got possession of the lyric scene by an unexampled success. With this poem, whose action is insignificant, and almost ridiculous, the Orpheus of Naples was compelled to enter the lists against a rival armed with a superb tragedy of *Iphigenia in Aulide*. The success that *Roland* met with belonged exclusively to the genius of M. Piccini, and that of Atys proved that nothing was wanting to this great composer to equal or surpass the *glory* of his rival, but poems the plot of which was more interesting, and their progress and action more dramatic. That of Dido, which M. Marmontel decried because it was not in conformity with his principles, justified universally the opinion which all good judges had already conceived of the talent of Piccini.

We have taken the liberty to make this short digression, merely because it sets in its most favourable light the disinterested homage which M. Piccini has paid to his rival, whose party has so long opposed his success, and who was made the instrument of a persecution to which he was very near fal-

ling a victim. We venture to repeat, to the glory of the Chevalier Gluck, a compliment which comes with the better grace, as it is the confession of M. Piccini, *that the lyric theatre owes to this composer what the French stage owes to Corneille;* and we are of opinion, that, in thus speaking, M. Piccini has been the organ of posterity: it is the province of men of genius like himself to be its interpreter. But that which M. Piccini could not say, that which men the most enlightened think, and which that same posterity whose justice placed *Phedra* and *Athalia* in the rank of the first theatrical pieces will confirm, is, that if the revolution made by the Chevalier Gluck in our lyric scene,—if the character of his genius, the asperity of his productions, the sublimity of his ideas, the incoherence, the triviality of those ideas which frequently succeed them, present features of resemblance between him and the father of the French theatre; it is not less true, that the opera owes to Piccini what the French stage owes to the inimitable Racine, that is to say, that purity, that continued elegance of style, that exquisite sensibility, which so eminently characterize the author of *Phedra*, which were wanting equally to Gluck and to the great Corneille, and which constitute the charm of M. Piccini's compositions, as they will eternally adorn the verses of Racine. Perhaps also it is worthy of remark, that as the great Corneille has never been more worthily panegyrised than by Racine, in the speech which he addressed to the French Academy for the reception of Thomas

Corneille and M. Bergerat, so also was it from his emulator and rival, Piccini, that the Chevalier Gluck received the eulogy most worthy of his memory.

It was remarked, even in the time of Fontenelle, that the Carnival became every year less interesting. *Would not that seem to say,* said the philosopher, *that Lent is a little out of fashion?*

The style of the president de Montesquieu! said M. de Buffon contemptuously some time ago: *But has Montesquieu a style?* Did he not deserve this answer? *It is true, Montesquieu has only the style of genius, and you, Sir, have the genius of style.*

"When I reflect (says M. Sénac), on the progress of genius, on the advance of the sciences, on their general distribution, on the multitude of works of every kind, it appears to me that a time will come when wit and talent will be useless. The domain of thought will be like some vast country, the map of which will be traced out on a grand scale, and every part of it will be known. . . . . At that epoch, no more books will be written. All thoughts will be reduced to proverbs or sentences; there will be sentences on every subject, and education will doubtless consist in inculcating, at an early age, three or four volumes of proverbs. It will be so easy to make verses, that it will no

longer be a merit; there will be nothing but cantos and hemistichs, selected from all known works."

A lady of rank at sixty years of age took for her lover a man in an obscure situation; she said to one of her female friends: *A duchess is never more than thirty for a citizen.*

A husband said to his wife: *I grant you every thing, except princes and footmen.* This was correct, the two extremes dishonour by the scandal that they entail.

Nearly a thousand petitions from different municipalities and corporations of the kingdom have been presented, the object of which is to obtain of the king a more equal representation at the ensuing assembly of the States General, than at that of 1614. The petition of the inhabitants of Paris was drawn up by a doctor of medicine, M. Guillotin; a copy of it had been sent to all the notaries of Paris, with a letter inviting them to receive the signature of every citizen who was anxious to subscribe his name. The parliament, having disapproved the form of this expostulation, has summoned the syndics of the notaries and Dr. Guillotin to give an account of their conduct to the court; it was so simple, that they have had little trouble in justifying themselves. The court, however, has ordered that the said petitions should be reported to

the registry, and prohibited henceforth the circulating of such letters and advertisements. *The parliament is very ill,* said one of our jesters.—*Why so?—We should presume so, as it has just called in the notary and the physician.*

A gentleman of the states of Dauphiné, speaking of the pre-eminence of his rank, made the following remark; *Think of all the blood that the nobility has shed in battle.*—A man of low birth answered him:—*And the blood shed by the people in the same battles, do you think it was water?*

The Abbé de Mably used to think that the English system would not last ten years, and that the senate of Sweden would last for ever. The work in which he made this fine prophecy was not quite printed before the senate of Sweden was set aside. He was informed of it; he made answer: *The King of Sweden may alter his country, but not my book.*

A conjuror of Venice, who had boasted the performance of the greatest of miracles, that of recalling the dead to life, had the audacity to exercise this wonderful power on a corpse whose bier he saw passing at the time when he was haranguing the populace; he summoned it several times in the most urgent manner, to arise, and walk home. But as the corpse still turned a deaf ear, he concluded by saying to his auditory with a most im-

posing impatience: *Non ho veduto mai un morto cosi ostinato*—Never did I see so obstinate a corpse.

January, 1789.

The work of which I am going to give you an account, although printed, is not published, nor destined to be so. It is a collection of letters by the Baroness de Staël, ambassadress of Sweden, *On the Works and Character of J. J. Rousseau*, a small volume in-12mo. of 140 pages. She has only printed twenty copies of it for the benefit of her most intimate friends, and accompanied with infinite restrictions. We do not, however, conceive ourselves to have betrayed the secret in endeavouring to lay before you, to the utmost of our power, the most interesting details of a production which would, under any circumstances, have appeared to us of great value, from whatever pen it came, but which becomes the more admirable, when we know that it was wrested from the dissipations of a young person of twenty years of age, surrounded by all the illusions of youth, by all the pleasures which the most brilliant society of the city and the court can furnish, and by all the homage which the glory of her father, and her own celebrity can attract.

The first of these letters contains some general ideas on the style of Rousseau. We subjoin them: we shall bestow on them little commendation, and yet less criticism, that we may have the pleasure of extracting largely.

" He neither writes with rapidity nor facility,

but this was because as much time and effort were necessary to him to select, among a superabundance of ideas, the best, as ordinary writers require to give them birth; besides, his sentiments are so profound, his ideas so vast, that we are gainers by the august and slow progress of his genius. The reduction of chaos to form and order, the creation of the world is painted to the thought as the work of a long series of years, and the power of its author appears but the more imposing from the time devoted to his work.

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"The perfection of Rousseau's style is frequently extolled; I know not precisely whether that eulogy best becomes him. Perfection appears to consist rather in the absence of faults, than in the existence of great beauties, in circumspection rather than in freedom, in that which we always are, rather than in that which we shew ourselves sometimes; in a word perfection gives rather the idea of proportion than of grandeur; but Rousseau stoops and soars by turns, he is at one time beneath, at another time above perfection itself; he collects all his heat to a focus, and unites, for the purpose of burning, all those rays which if scattered, had only enlightened. Ah! if a man is never possessed but of a certain measure of strength, I prefer him who puts it all forth at once: let him be exhausted if it must be so, let him suffer me to fall, if he has but once raised me to the clouds. Rousseau however, uniting to

warmth and genius what is in its stricter sense, conception, frequently fills up with happy and ingenious thoughts, the intervals of his eloquence, and thus for ever rivets the attention and interest of his readers. . .M. de Buffon colours his style with his imagination, Rousseau animates it with his character; the one selects his expressions, they fall naturally from the other. The eloquence of M. de Buffon can only be the inheritance of a man of genius; passion might elevate to that of Rousseau. . . . .His style is not continually harmonious, but in passages inspired by his soul we find, not that imitative harmony adopted by the poets, not that succession of sonorous words which would charm even those who were ignorant of their meaning, but, if I may be permitted to say it, a sort of natural harmony, the accent of passion, which accords with it, as a perfect air harmonizes with the words which it expresses. He frequently forces into his service expressions in bad taste, but we at least perceive, by the affectation with which he employs them, that he is well aware of the criticisms to which they are exposed, he prides himself on forcing his readers to approve them, and perhaps from a sort of republican spirit, he will not recognize the existence of high and low terms, of ranks and conditions even in words themselves, &c. . .

These reflections are terminated by a rapid analysis of Rousseau's first works, of his discourses on the sciences, on the inequality of conditions, on the danger of public spectacles

The most serious reproach made by Madame de Staël against Rousseau, is an assertion in a note affixed to this last work, that women are not capable of works that require much soul and passion. But would not that very argument which our fair author has suppressed, be the most irresistible?

The second letter is exclusively consecrated to Heloïse. We cannot help noticing, that, of all the letters, this appears to be written with the least warmth. She says herself: "*I will discuss the Heloïse, as I should do, if my heart were grown old.*"

After remarking that the intention of the author appears to have been to encourage to repentance by the example of the virtue of Julia, women guilty of her fault; after confessing the subject of Clarissa, and of Grandison, to be moral, she adds: "But the true utility of a romance is in its effects rather than in its plan, in the sentiments which it inspires rather than the events which it recounts... Pardon, Rousseau, if at the end of this work we feel ourselves more animated in favour of virtue, if we are more scrupulous in our duties, if simple manners, beneficence, and retirement have more attractions for us....."

"I discover sometimes (she says) some whimsical ideas mixed with sensibility; I cannot, for instance, endure the method which Julia infuses into her passions; in a word, every thing in these letters proves her to be mistress of herself, and I revolt from the thought that she should deliberately

form the resolution of being culpable. She who renounces the charms of virtue, should, at least, have those which arise from obedience to the impulses of the heart. Rousseau deceived himself if he thought, according to the ordinary rules, that Julia would appear more modest by appearing less impassioned: no, the excess of that passion should have been pleaded as her excuse, and it is only by painting the violence of her love, that she diminished the immorality of the fault which love inspired her to commit."

This criticism had been more justly applied to the talent than to the intention of Rousseau; for does the violence of a sentiment ever shew itself in a manner more lively and more interesting, than in the very efforts made to surmount it? Then it is, that it ventures, if I may say so, to display itself entire without offending that circumspection, and that modesty, the charm of which is inseparable from the grand passions.

The third letter, on *Emilius*, appears to us to present a number of profound and acute ideas; we regret the impossibility of citing more than a small portion of them.

"We are supposed to have well defined the ideas of Rousseau, when we have called his book a systematic work. Perhaps the boundaries of human intellect have been enlarged so much within this century, that we have acquired the habit of respecting new ideas; but can we not suppose a time when men might be so far estranged from natural

sentiments that they might appear like a discovery, and a man of genius may be necessary to tread back his steps, and again find the road whose traces the prejudices of the world might have obliterated?"

"Virtue is not, like glory, the aim of emulation; those who seek the one, refuse to have equals; those who seek the other, slacken sometimes in their efforts when they find companions in indolence."

"All the world has adopted the physical system of education from Rousseau. If the same thought had created the physical and moral world, if the one was, as it were, the relief to the other, why should we scruple to find in the entire system of Rousseau the proof of its truth?"

"We often hear speak of the danger of eloquence; but I believe it to be very necessary, when we have to oppose virtue to passion. Eloquence gives birth to those emotions in the soul, which of themselves decide the choice that we make; eloquence alone has the power to add that forcible impulse to reason, and to give life to wrestle, on equal terms, with the passions."

These reflexions of the noblest philosophy are followed by an apostrophe to her daughter, full of gentleness and sensibility, which is terminated by these affecting words:

"Yes, my daughter, for thee will I listen to the lessons of Rousseau; his eloquent goodness assures to you my indulgence; perhaps I should have found it in my own soul, but the impression of his

sublime works is so profound, that we confound it with nature herself."

In speaking of the *Profession of Faith of the Savoyard Curate*, it was natural for Madame de Staël to compare the merit of this work with that of *The Importance of Religious Opinions*, and with this remarkable parallel she concludes her fourth letter.

" This work, *the Profession of Faith of the Savoyard Curate*, this work, she says, was but the precursor of that book, which formed an epoch in the history of thoughts, because it enlarged their boundaries ; of that book which seems to anticipate a future life, by divining the secrets which are one day to be revealed to us; of that book which mankind united might present to the Supreme Being as the longest stride which they have made towards his presence; of that book, which the name of its author consecrates, by sheltering it from the disdain of mediocrity, since it is the greatest dictator of his age, the brightest and clearest genius who has demanded attention on a subject until this day rejected as vague and obscure; of that book, whose majestic and sublime sensibility paints the author loving mankind, as the guardian angel of the earth would cherish them. Pardon, me, Rousseau, to thee my work is consecrated, but another has become the object of my worship. ——Thyself, thyself above all men, thy heart impassioned for humanity, would have adored him who, long occupied with the existence of man on

earth, after pointing out to him all the blessings that a good government can assure to him, has sought to prevent his most cruel misfortunes, by giving rest to his agitated soul. Yes, Rousseau knew how to admire, and never writing but in compliance with the impulse of his soul, vain jealousies were estranged from his heart; he would necessarily have eulogized him whom I dare not name; him whom I approach without fear when I see in him no more than the object of my tenderness, but who most of all penetrates me with respect when I contemplate him at a distance; him, in a word, whom posterity, equally with his own age, will mark out by all the titles of genius, but whom my destiny and my love permit me to call my father."

If the reading of these four first letters left us penetrated with admiration at finding in the thoughts of a woman of twenty such an extent and maturity of understanding, with what surprise should we read in the fifth, her judgment of the *Social Contract!* Her ideas, on this subject, lead naturally to the objects which interest at this moment every mind. "Rousseau, why art not thou to witness the imposing spectacle, which France is about to present, of a great event prepared before hand, and with which, for the first time, chance will have had no participation! In this, perhaps, in this grand work men would appear to thee more worthy of esteem."

The sixth letter treats of Rousseau's taste for music and botany. "Rousseau (says the author)

wished to introduce Melodrames into France; he gave *Pygmalion* as a specimen of one. Perhaps this sort of spectacle ought not to be rejected. Music expresses situations, and words develope them: music might undertake to paint sentiments beyond the reach of words, and words sentiments too imperceptibly shaded for music."

It is observable that he distinguished plants by their forms, and never by their properties. The poetical and wild imagination of Rousseau could not endure to connect with the image of a flower, the ornament of nature, the remembrance of the evils and infirmities of man.

Madame de Staël has studied the character of this celebrated man in his own works, and the plan of her letters presents to us the same method which she thought proper to pursue in her studies; we may then consider her last letter, on the character of Rousseau, as the result of all the others: the portrait which she gives of him appears as valuable from its resemblance as from its spirit and ingenuity.

"Rousseau must have had a figure which was not remarked as he passed by, but which could never be forgotten when he had been seen to speak; small eyes which possessed no distinctive character, but successively received that of the different emotions of his soul; his eyebrows were very prominent, they appeared made to favour his wildness, and screen it from the sight of men: he almost always held down his head, but this was

inspired neither by flattery nor fear; meditations and melancholy had inclined his head as a flower, which is bent down by its own weight or by storms. When silent, his physiognomy had no expression; his affections and thoughts were never painted on his face, but when he joined in conversation; when he was silent, they withdrew to the depth of his soul: his features were common; but when he spoke, they were insensibly lighted up; he resembled those gods whom Ovid describes to us sometimes as quitting their terrestrial disguise, and making themselves known by the bright lustre of their looks.

"His mind was slow, his soul was ardent. By dint of meditating he became impassioned; he was not visited by sudden and visible emotions, but all his sentiments gathered strength from reflection. He has perhaps fallen in love with a woman, by reflecting on her during absence; she left him cold; she meets him again inflamed.... I conceive imagination to have been the first of his faculties, and that it even absorbed all the others; he might be said rather to dream than to exist, and the events of his life passed rather in his head than around him. This kind of existence should have made him a stranger to distrust, because it did not allow observation; but it did not prevent him from seeing, and only caused him to see incorrectly."

Madame de Staël considers it as certain, that Rousseau put himself to death, and this opinion

appears confirmed by all the concurring circumstances which she has related.

"One of his friends (she says) received from him a letter some time before his death, which seemed to announce that design. Since then, having informed himself carefully of his last moments, he has discovered that on the morning of the day when Rousseau died, he arose in perfect health, but said, nevertheless, that he was going to look on the sun for the last time, and before he went out, took some coffee, which he made himself: he re-entered some hours after, and beginning to suffer dreadfully, he gave express orders that no assistance should be procured, and no person informed of his condition. Some few days before this sad morning, he had discovered the vile inclinations of his wife for a man in low condition; he appeared shocked at this discovery, and remained eight successive days upon the margin of the water, in profound meditation. I think if we connect these details with his habitual sadness, with the extraordinary increase of his terrors and his suspicions, it is impossible to doubt that this great but unhappy man voluntarily put an end to his life."

The few hours we were allowed us to keep the copy which had been confided to us, will excuse us for not having extracted more; but these citations will doubtless be sufficient to justify the admiration which this charming work has inspired.

Impromptu Harangue of the Viscount de Ségur, at a supper at the Baron Besenval's.

* Sire, your children—the people—the nation—You are its father—the constitution—the executive power in your hands—the legislative power—the equilibrium of finances—the glory of your reign—the love of your people—Sire, the credit—the foundations of the monarchy shaken—all concurs—all re-assures—and your equity—the eyes of astonished Europe—the spirit of sedition destroyed—the tears of your people—posterity—abundance—glory—patriotism—abuse of power—clergy—nobility—third estate—sublime effort—virtue—confidence—the enlightened age—the administration—the splendor of the throne—rare beneficence—ages to come—wisdom—prosperity—these are the vows of your kingdom—powerful union of an important nation—ever-memorable epoch—lustre of your crown and benedictions—the virtues of Louis XII.—the kindness of Henry IV.—Sire, 12 and 4 make XVI.

Madame d'Aligre had some friends to dinner, the repast was very scanty, and the guests diverted themselves with slandering their acquaintances. *I'faith,* said M. de Lauraguais, *if we did not here eat up our neighbour with our bread, we should die of hunger.*

* The following elements of a speech cannot but be serviceable on all public occasions. This skeleton address proves that nonsense is talked on both sides of the channel in the same way.—T.

M. the Privy Seal asked Mirabeau one day, what sort of a man his brother was? *If,* said Mirabeau, *I am to answer frankly, in any other family he would pass for a man of wit and wickedness, but in ours, he is an ordinary man.*

One of the labourers elected to be deputy in the precinct under the administration of M. de Casgin had the appearance of a man who could make no great pretensions to wit. Well, said M. Casgin to this man, after having placed him at table by his side, what do you propose to ask of the States-General? *The suppression of pigeons, of rabbits, and of monks.*—Why truly that is a strange mode of classing them.—Nay, my Lord, it is very clear; the first devour us in the seed, the second in the blade, the third in the sheaf.

On the tenth of March, the Italian company gave the first representation of *the Sentimental Man,* a comedy in five acts, in verse, by M. Pluteau, who has only made himself known by this work. It is an imitation of one of the most celebrated comedies of the English theatre, *the School for Scandal,* by Mr. Sheridan. One of our little theatres had already seized the subject under the title of *the Uncle and two Nephews;* this was a miserable attempt, which only ended in daubing an excellent picture.

This copy of an admirable model has not succeeded. The progress of the intrigue appears cold

and weak; nor do we find any interest excepting in the scenes which are faithfully imitated from the original. The French author may be reproached with omitting several of them whose extremely comic cast would have infused into his work more bustle and variety. But we are far from pretending that we could successfully allow ourselves all the pictures, all the situations, all the pleasantry of Mr. Sheridan's piece; the great liberty of the English theatre may give success to these bold attempts at which our ideas of theatrical propriety would revolt. I do not affirm that morality at Paris is more pure than at London, that society does not offer among us as many, perhaps even more models, which bear a resemblance to all the vices which Mr. Sheridan has painted in the *School for Scandal*; but pictures representing morals such as they are, in all their truth, would not be admitted on our stage. We there see daily unmarried women distractedly in love, coquettes, inconstant, betraying at the same time a number of lovers; but the example of a married woman, gallant as Lady Teazle, jealous of her lover, ready to meet him at a rendezvous which she has accepted, would on the French stage be considered too scandalous for representation. In proportion to the increase of corruption in society, and more particularly that of women, which, in France, has a greater influence than elsewhere on public morals, we become more difficult on this point, more austere in all that relates to theatrical decency. Our comedies have, from this cause, been deprived

of their most comic effects; they have even been compelled to depart from the fine moral intention at which they should aim. We may doubt whether, in our days, Molière would have been permitted to present Tartuffe as he has done, returning, after having closed the door, with eyes inflamed, rushing into the arms of Elmira, although we well know that she by no means appears to favour the desires of that impostor unless to undeceive her husband who is concealed beneath the table; and that the moral tendency of a conjecture so critical should suspend the effect at a moment when the honour of the husband, and public decency, might thus be wounded by it. This reflection leads us naturally to remark that the comedy of the *School for Scandal* has a certain similarity to that of Tartuffe; many parts of the action are alike; both authors intended to paint and to unmask a hypocrite. That of the *School for Scandal* is a man of the world, and from that very circumstance his hypocrisy is less comic than that of the false doctor, because the contrasts are less prominent. Both of these hypocrites have equally gained the confidence of their benefactors, but the artifice by which Tartuffe had contrived to invest all the faculties and all the affections of his dupe, the credulity of a husband whom it is necessary to convince as it were, in spite of himself, present to us the effects of a touch far more masterly than the ingenious theatrical device which leads Sir Peter Teazle to discover his wife behind a screen in the house of his ward. This comparison cannot

permit us to forget the happy conception of the character of Charles, of that wild young man, who, amid all his dissipations and follies, shews the most sensible and generous heart, refuses to sell the portrait of his uncle, although offered for it an excessive price, and hastens, with the money which he receives at this time of need, to succour an old relation in misfortune; a charming character, which offers a powerful contrast to that of the hypocritical brother, a creation entirely owing to Mr. Sheridan, a happy opposition, which perhaps is wanting to the great beauties of Molière's masterpiece.

The Sentimental Man appears in general to be well written; we detect in it some negligence, some stiffness, more generally we are inclined to praise that natural and unaffected style and conduct of the plot; in short, its failure of success must only be attributed to the extreme difficulty which there will ever be in adapting to our stage the best foreign pieces, and particularly those of character, whose physiognomy is local, and from its locality borrow a large portion of its merit. It is almost impossible to preserve their most characteristic features without rendering them almost unintelligible to the nation before which they are presented; and to alter them, is almost always to destroy their effect.

May, 1789.

We hastened to announce to you the *Travels of Anacharsis* at the time when the work

appeared; we were not so anxious to send you an account of the sensation which it had produced, and of the judgment which we ventured to form of it. At this time, when the opinion to be entertained of the work appears more generally decided, we will take the liberty of speaking of it with greater confidence. Few books ever excited, even before publication, so much interest: the reputation of the author, the personal esteem which he has merited on more than one account, the expectation in which we long remained from a labour which had occupied, as it were, a whole life, all justified a prejudice so favourable; and thus the first edition of the book has sold off in less than two months. It is indeed one of the finest monuments yet erected to the glory of the most interesting people in the universe; there exists not, I think in any language any thing so exact, any thing so complete, on the arts, sciences, religion, politics, manners, and customs of Greece; and, in our language, there are at least few works so nicely correct in their style, and so invariably elegant. In what then is it deficient? In nothing but talent and imagination. There is none in the plan; there is hardly any more in the details of its execution.

The Abbé Barthelemy has himself revealed to us in an advertisement, all the secret of his composition. He supposes a young Scythian, by the name of Anacharsis, to arrive in Greece some years before the birth of Alexander; and that from Athens

his usual place of residence, he makes several journeys into the neighbouring provinces, observing everywhere the manners and usages of the people, assisting at their festivals, studying the nature of their government, sometimes devoting his leisure to researches on the progress of the human mind, sometimes conversing with the great men who then flourished, &c. To this supposition all the efforts of his genius are confined, and he has derived no other advantage from it in the course of his work than in the advertisement here cited; thus the fiction which he has allowed himself is merely an idle frame in which he endeavoured to inchase, to the best of his power, the more or less important results of his learned and laborious researches. There results from it neither motion nor interest; his young Anacharsis is but a borrowed name; he neither gives nor receives animation; but is merely a cold witness to what he sees, hears, and tells; had it been an old abbé, a member of the Academy of Belles Lettres and Inscriptions who had been the traveller, he would have said neither more nor less. Is it worth while to imagine the part of a young Scythian, when the author has no intention of turning him to any account? This kind of fiction, far from varying the interest of the pictures presented by the immense fertility of the subject, only serves to shed over it a sort of monotony; it is the journal of a traveller who writes mighty well indeed, who gives a very clear account of all that he observes, but who never takes any personal interest

in what surrounds him; he is ever a stranger to the whole. Nothing happens to him which has the power either to accelerate or retard his progres; the analysis of an Athenian supper, that of a system of philosophy or a theatrical piece, all is performed, all is brought about in the same manner; there is not even any art, any happy design, in the choice which directs one object to succeed another; thus, however satisfied you may be with the chapter which you have last read, you feel no great inclination to read that which follows: and if the author has been thirty years in composing his book, he who should only seek in it amusement or interest, might well be tempted to demand thirty years to read it.

The last work of M. de Pauw on the Greeks cannot boast an erudition so discriminating and exact as that of the *Travels of Anacharsis*; the style is very far from being as pure and elaborate; he merely promises philosophical researches; the author should partake of the interest of a romance; yet it is not less true, that the book of M. de Pauw is more interesting, and the reason is plain and palpable; it is because he more frequently awakens attention by original views, by curious comparisons; it is that a simple discussion, provided it be lively and animated, possesses more motion than long recitals, that are mere recitals, bereft of all interest, of all dramatic action.

The faults which we cannot but lay to the charge of the Abbé Barthelemy, are redeemed, as

much as possible, by every kind of merit of which his work was susceptible, by the extreme happiness of the subject, by the exactitude of researches, by the elaborate care paid to every detail of execution. The style would be perfect were it possessed of that life, that flower, which a more glowing imagination would have imparted. We here find collected in a point, with more or less happiness, all that can most surely be depended on, all that is interesting in that great people, to whom we are indebted for the first models in all the branches of art and science, the first lessons of all the pleasures with which taste and imagination can embellish life. It is merely, if you like it, a compilation most perfectly composed of the most precious materials which remain to us from the history and antiquities of Greece. It is easy to conceive the plan of a more interesting work, but such as it is, we must allow it to be superior to the Travels of Pausanias; perhaps even to all modern works of the same kind.

There is a singularity with which we cannot fail to be struck in reading the *Travels of Young Anacharsis*, which is the striking resemblance that we discover between the manners of Paris and of Athens; this is so remarkable in certain details, that we should be tempted to believe the author to have imagined them, if on the one hand, we were not sure that he can imagine nothing, and on the other hand if we did not see the most trifling circumstances that he relates justified by the most authentic testimonies. This resemblance is the more

remarkable as there is so little analogy between the climate which the two people inhabit, their government, their laws, their customs and religion.

Anecdote of the Iron Mask.

August, 1789.

M. de La Borde, an ancient *valet-de chambre* of the king, has found among the papers of the Maréchal de Richelieu, an original letter from the Duchess of Modena, daughter of the Regent, to the Maréchal, who was then her lover. This letter begins with these words, which are in cyphers.

" Here at length is the famous history. I have wrested from them the secret. It has cost me more than I can express. . . . . "

Then follows the history of the Iron Mask, from a declaration made by his governor on his death-bed, as follows.

" During the Queen's pregnancy, two herdsmen presented themselves, and asked to speak with the king, when they told him that they had had a revelation by which they were informed, that the queen was pregnant with *two Dauphins*, whose birth would occasion a civil war, which would throw all the kingdom into confusion. The king *wrote* immediately to Cardinal Richelieu, who returned for answer that *he need not alarm himself*, and requested him to send him the two men, that he would secure their persons and send them to Saint-Lazare.

" The queen was brought to bed at the con-

clusion of the king's dinner, of a son, (Louis XIV) in presence of all the persons, who, from their situations, attend at the delivery of the queen, and the formal account of it was taken in writing, according to custom.

" Four hours after, Madame Perronet, midwife to the queen, came and informed the king, who was taking some refreshment, that the queen felt renewed labour-pains. He sent for the chancellor, and with him entered the queen's apartment, who was delivered of a second son, *more beautiful and goodly than the first.* The birth was attested by a written document, which was signed by the king, the Chancellor, Madame Perronet, the physician, and a nobleman of the court, who was afterwards appointed governor to the Iron Mask, and was shut up at the same time with him, as will soon be shewn.

" The king himself drew up, *at three different times, with the Chancellor,* the formula of the oath which he administered to all those who had been present at this second birth, never to reveal this important secret, unless on the death of the Dauphin; and he made them swear never to touch on the subject even among themselves. The infant was put under the care of Madame Perronet, who was ordered to say that it was a child who had been entrusted to her by a lady of the court.

" When the child arrived at an age to be taken out of the hands of women, and consigned to those of men, he was entrusted to the same man

who had been present at his birth. He settled himself with his pupil at Dijon, and, from this place, maintained a constant correspondence with the Queen-Mother, Cardinal Mazarin, and the King. He did not cease to be a courtier in his retirement; he evinced for the young prince that respect which a courtier always pays to him who may become his master. This condescension, which the prince could not reconcile from a man whom he looked up to as his father, excited certain suspicions on the subject of his birth and condition. The answers were far from satisfactory. One day, the young prince asked his guardian to shew him the portrait of the King (Louis XIV); the guardian disconcerted answered by making frivolous excuses; he had recourse to the same subterfuges whenever his pupil sought to discover a mystery to which he appeared every day to attach more importance. *The young man was not a stranger to love;* his first vows were addressed to a chamber-maid of the house; he conjured her to procure him a portrait of the king; she refused her services at first by alleging the order which all the people in the house had received, to give him nothing but in their master's presence. He insisted, and she promised to procure him one. At sight of the portrait, he was struck with his own resemblance to the king, went to his governor, repeated his ordinary questions, but in a more pressing and resolute manner; again demanded of him the portrait of the king. The governor again wished to elude the question: you

deceive me (said he), here is the portrait of the king, and a letter which is addressed to you, apprizes me of a mystery, the meaning of which you would to no purpose withhold from me. I am brother to the king, I wish to set off this instant, make myself recognized by the court, and enjoy the privileges of my rank. (The governor asserts in his death-bed confession, that he could never discover by what means the young prince had procured the letter in question; he only said, that he knew not whether he had opened a little casket in which he was accustomed to put all letters from the king, from the queen, and from Cardinal Mazarin, or if he had intercepted the letter which he presented to him). He shut up the prince, and sent off a messenger immediately to Saint-Jean-de-Luz, where the court then was treating of the peace of the Pyrenees, and marriage of the king.

"The answer was an order from the King to carry off the Prince and the Governor, who were conducted to the Isle Sainte-Marguerite, and afterwards removed to the Bastille, whither the Governor of the Isle Sainte-Marguerite followed them."

M. de La Borde, who has long been familiar with Louis XV, has compared this recital with conversations he has sometimes held with the King on the Iron Mask, and they exactly correspond.

On the curiosity which he frequently testified to Louis XV concerning this truly extraordinary history, the King uniformly answered: "I pity him, but his detention has injured no one but himself,

and has prevented the Kingdom from suffering great misfortunes; you cannot know the secret." And when on this subject, he called to mind the great curiosity which he has shewn in his infancy to learn the history of the Iron Mask, and that he was always answered that he must not become acquainted with it until his majority; that on the day of his majority he had demanded it; that the courtiers who besieged the door of his chamber pressed around him with interrogations, and that he had answered them: "You cannot know it."

M. de la Borde had searched the registers of Saint Lazare, but they only go back to the epoch of the birth of Louis XIV.

Extract from the manuscript of a celebrated woman, entitled "Advice to my young Friend."

You are yet far removed, my dear Paulina, from that period when we are compelled to own, that all things pass away, but the avowal of your daughter at that age which attracts attention, and the baptismal registry in which your age will be searched, will form the term to your pretensions. You must then judge what will be said of you, by what you hear remarked of other women. To forearm you against this critical moment, I will recount to you the manner in which I passed it myself.

I had attained to the age of forty years without perceiving the slightest degradation in my person; whether the extreme ornament necessary to the parts which I played favoured the illusion of others,

or whether it was kept up by the variety of characters that I represented, or whether the world were overpowered by the passions which I strove to paint with truth, or by the stage-effect, all my friends declared me to be charming, and my lover loved me to distraction; in one word, I suspected nothing. One day from an over desire to please, I wished to add to my charms the aid of that elegant ornament which we have always in reserve, and which excites an AH! of surprise when we appear. As I looked steadfastly in the glass to see whether my hair set well, it appeared to me that my *femme-de chambre* was indolent, that she had forgotten the character of my countenance, and intended dismissing me from her hands on that day with less charms than usual. However, I confidently called for that charming cap which was to surmount the whole, but turn it as I would, it disappointed me, I threw it down, I called for twenty others, and, confounded at finding none which became me, I scrupulously examined, with my nose on the glass, my ownself, on which a clear pure light descended. I discovered several furrows of wrinkles on my forehead! in the two corners of my eyes! in the turn of my neck! the whiteness of my teeth had not the same lustre! my lips were less fresh, my eyes less lively, and unfortunately I was on that day in perfectly good health! When compelled to own to myself that it was not the fault of my *femme-de-chambre*, and of my caps, but that I was no longer the same, I fell into tears. What weakness! you will say. Alas! I was in love, my

happiness depended on pleasing, my reason commanded me to make no more pretensions to it! That moment was frightful; my grief lasted nearly six months; it was by so much the more painful as I was compelled to conceal it, that I might not avow from what cause it arose; but from the first instant of this cruel discovery, I devoted myself to the greatest simplicity; by attracting less attention to my dress, I flattered myself, that I should more easily escape from observation by detail; criticism and envy must at least be silenced before those who do themselves justice; I no longer required any thing; while I doubled all the cards of love, I no longer spoke its language, insensibly I repressed in myself all its desires. My conduct was remarked, I was requested to explain it, the explanation was affectionately received; by these means I obtained the enjoyment of a heart for five years longer, where possession was disputed by so many women, and of which the inheritance of a large fortune deprived me for ever.

Reflect on this, my dear friend. When arrived at the age of thirty, men have the folly to declare us old, and to blame in us pretensions to which they aspire even to the most disgusting caducity; this injustice is more worthy our pity than our anger, be not offended, and make no sacrifices to it; you should consult your vanity, your reason, your delicacy, if you would know to what pretensions you have a claim. You cannot then dissemble, that each day robs you of a grace, but your soul exer-

cised by time and experience would replace them by virtues; they will assure you a far more acceptable empire, far more grateful and more durable than that of beauty.

Letter of M. Petra, Counsellor, Administrator to the Department of Domains of the City of Paris.

December, 1789.

It is not an eulogy of Vernet that I have the honour of addressing to you, but simply a few facts connected with the life of that celebrated man, collected in the intimacy of his society, the only homage with which I am able to repay the honour of his friendship. I much regret my not foreseeing that some day I should have to communicate with you on the subject of that great painter; he loved to speak of his infancy, of his studies, of his travels, you might question him on every instant of his life, this was his favourite theme, and I might have engaged him, without indiscretion, to put me in possession of anecdotes yet more interesting perhaps than those whose remembrance I have treasured. But the history of Vernet*, like that of every person of superior talents, is in his works: it belongs to an artist to write the life of this great painter; I propose, however simply, to relate some

* Claude-Joseph Vernet, painter to the King, counsellor of the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture, member of several other academies, born at Avignon, August 14th, 1714, of Antoine Vernet and Thérèse Garnies, died at Paris, December 3d, 1789.

circumstances which will, perhaps, inspire you with as much love for his character as admiration for his genius.

Vernet was of that small number of men who announce almost at their birth what they are hereafter to become. His father was a painter at Avignon; his talents and fortune were moderate. His mother has often told him that the plaything which most delighted him, and which most certainly made him dry his tears, was one of his father's brushes. This fact, which somewhat resembles an old woman's story, will appear to deserve more attention, when it is known that this infant amused himself at three years old with his father's pencils; they were carefully put out of his way, because he seized all that he could find, and did not fail, as may be easily conceived, to spoil the pictures which he strove to retouch. It is, however, certain, that Vernet, at five years of age, began to draw the human figure, and his mother, on his return from Italy, shewed him a nunber of heads which he had designed at that age, and which she had preserved. At seven or eight years of age his father gave him a little pallet and an easil. He granted him, as a recompense for his studies in drawing, the permission to paint sketches, with which he was extremely well satisfied. He destined him to be an historical painter, and the style of young Vernet gave him reason to hope that he would be successful in that line. His progress was so rapid and so decided, that his father's friends

determined him to send his son at an early age to Rome, for the purpose of cultivating his rising talent by studying the grand models. Vernet was between fifteen and sixteen years of age when he set out from Avignon. His father gave him a dozen louis, and recommended him to a courier who undertook to conduct the youth to Marseilles. Vernet has often repeated to me that the first impsession of the sentiment which determined his choice for the branch in which he became so celebrated, dates from this journey. Provence, which almost reaches the gates of Avignon, presents to travellers situations which sensibly partake of the character of country which forms the enchantment of Vaucluse. The conductor of young Vernet could hardly prevent him from stopping at every step to sketch that group of mountains, whose form and sterility announce the vicinity of the sea while the plains which skirt them afford a vegetation accelerated by the heat of the brightest sun, and roads bordered by pomegranates, and other odoriferous shrubs. Vernet never forgot the impression made on him by the first view of the sea, when he discovered it for the first time from the Viste, a mountain situated at two leagues from Marseilles. That immense bason which projects farther than the eye can follow, the isles of If, of Pomegues, of Ratoneau, placed in front at three leagues distant from the land, like fabrics built in the midst of that immense lake to break its uniformity; the tower, called le Bouc, which is termi-

nated by losing itself in the horizon; Marseilles, and that crowd of pleasure-houses which crown the right of this picture; the little port and peninsula of Martigues, placed on the left of that great road to which a multitude of vessels give a sort of life and motion; the grand whole of this superb spectacle inflamed the genius of our young artist, and that moment decided that he would make all those master-pieces of marine landscape with which he has enriched Europe. Vernet leaped from the vehicle, seized his pencil, sat down at the foot of a rock which sheltered him from the sun, and neither the remonstrances nor prayers of his conductor could succeed in tearing him away, and inducing him to go forward on his journey. He did not quit his pencil until the sun refused him light; then it was, that, dying with hunger, he joined the carrier at the inn where he was expected. Next day Vernet procured canvas and colours, and shut himself up for seven days to paint the most detestable marine picture that he ever executed, as he says, in his life, but which he would gladly have found again, when, ten years after he returned from Rome to Marseilles, to compose that famous Tempest which he finished for M. Poulhariès, a merchant of that city, a picture which rendered the engraver Baléchou, a countryman of Vernet, since then established in England, so celebrated.

Vernet embarked at the port of Marseilles to continue his voyage to Rome. The vessel on which he embarked met with a dreadful tempest off the

isle of Sardinia. The violence of the wind already announced to the crew the danger which threatened it; but this danger was a piece of good fortune for our young painter. He demanded, and gained permission to be tied to the main-mast, and there, tossed about on every side, covered each instant with sheets of water, if he was prevented from drawing any of the effects of the furious sea, he saw them, they were engraved on his memory, which never forgot any impression; and perhaps it is to the view of this tempest that we owe the multiplied and varied pictures which he has made of these sublime accidents of nature.

Vernet arrives at Rome, makes designs which he sells very ill. Paintings of the sea can hardly be appreciated but by connoisseurs; this style, more than any other, requires colours to speak to eyes which are not habituated to it, and the effect of its application is not so sensible as that of historical painting. Vernet began with painting small marine views; for a long time he thought himself very fortunate in selling them for a sequin or two. His father no longer sent him remittances, and Vernet, hardly able to subsist by the productions of his brush, was on the point of returning home, when he was counselled to present himself with two finished little marine pieces at the house of a Cardinal who protected the arts. Vernet, refused admittance by the porter, retired very sad without success, when a friend, who happened to meet him, informed him that admittance to a prince of

the church could only be procured by the same means as admittance to a temporal prince. He returned to the house of his eminence, gave the silver ticket to his servants, and was introduced. The Cardinal looked at the pictures, gave him their value, and our young painter was much astonished when he heard an order given to count out to him four louis. The Cardinal encouraged Vernet by all the eulogies which he added to his munificence, and made his reputation. I very much regret, on this account, that I have forgot the name of a man, but for whose bounty Vernet would perhaps have been compelled to abandon an art to which he has done so much honour. Vernet, encouraged, employed, omitted nothing to bring his talent to perfection. The branch of his art to which he most addicted himself, was that of the varied tones of the heaven or the atmosphere, whose effect is so important on the objects which it surrounds. He has informed me, that he did not completely become acquainted with the different tints of the purest sky, until after a succession of studies which he made in the different *campagnas* with which Rome is surrounded. One day he had painted the clearest sky, and its reflections on all the objects of his picture appeared to him of the greatest truth. He returned on the morrow to the same place, the sky was cloudless as the day before, the air as pure, and his picture no longer displayed that truth of tone and light which had made it so successful the day before; all the objects of it offered

to him a different tint from that which he supposed himself to have caught. Then it was that, convinced of that variety of atmospheric colours which are so fleeting and so dependent on the winds, he devised some tablets, which he carried perpetually about him, and on which he painted, not merely the different tints of heavenly azure, but the different tones and accidents of light which the different heavenly colours reflected on the same objects. It is from this invaluable remembrance* that Vernet drew, if I may say so, the air of his pictures, and that surprising display of the effects of light whose truth particularly distinguishes his best pieces.

Studies of this kind, which are but too often neglected by painters, hastened the reputation of Vernet. When only twenty years of age, his pictures were abroad in high repute: but Vernet loved pleasure, did not labour enough, and expended his money. He lodged at a hairdresser's, who, like almost every Roman, loved painting, and was proud at having in his house a celebrated artist. The hairdresser had suffered the payment of his lodgings to accumulate for several months, which

* This, said an author of an article in the *Moniteur Universal*, was an alphabet of tones which he always carried with him, in a book interleaved with white paper. The different characters of his alphabet were attached to as many different tints. If he saw the sun rise or set in the midst of the most brilliant colours, a storm approach or blow over, he opened his tablets, and, with as much dispatch as we could write ten or twelve words, he indicated every gradation in the tones of the heaven that he admired.

Vernet did not seem in much haste to pay. His host used to come up stairs to him, and watched him, while painting, in silence. At length Vernet, who imputed this assiduity to the money which he owed him, spoke to him of his debt. He was much surprised to hear his host declare, that finding he could not answer the orders for pictures which so many great personages gave him, and wishing earnestly to be possessed of one, he had thought the surest mode of securing it was to permit the sum which he owed him to accumulate, persuaded that he would prefer this mode of acquittal to taking from his pocket so much money at one time. Flattered at this species of artifice, Vernet promised the hairdresser to satisfy him to his taste; but the latter testified so great a desire to be possessed of the picture which he had just finished under his eyes, that, pressed by his entreaties, Vernet consented to give it to him. He had forgotten that this picture was promised to the Cardinal his protector. His eminence arrives; is enchanted, declares to the young painter that he considers this picture as his best piece, and orders his people to take it to his carriage, when the hairdresser falls down at his feet, entreating his compassion, and declares to him, with tears in his eyes, that he will not survive the loss of this picture. Vernet, confounded, but interrupted by the Cardinal, avowed to him the cause of a scene so remarkable; the Cardinal himself, touched by the hairdresser's love for the art, justified the indiscre-

tion of Vernet by permitting the picture to remain in the hairdresser's possession. It is *a day-break*, one of the best pictures that Vernet left at Rome.

Our young painter was passionately fond of music. He was most intimately acquainted with Pergolesi; that friendship was so strong, that if the name of Pergolesi was ever mentioned before Vernet, the remembrances which it recalled brought tears into his eyes: they lived almost inseparable. The painter had a piano-forte at his house to amuse his friend, and the composer, in turn, procured an easel and pallets: the one played while the other painted, and Vernet has often confessed to me that these moments were the happiest for his genius and his heart; the songs of Pergolesi impressed on him the sentiment of nature in her loveliest forms; and often, said he, have I been indebted for the sweetest tints, and their harmony, to the impression which the charm of music and the affecting voice of my friend imparted to my soul. Thus it was that Vernet witnessed the production of the *Stabat* and *La Serva Padrona:* that interlude met with the greatest success: but the *Stabat*, composed for a little convent of nuns in which Pergolesi had a sister, who had the charge of the turning-box, had not the same good fortune. Pergolesi, who, in composing that master-piece, did not wish or design to do more than an act of civility, ridiculed the grief of his friend, afflicted at a failure which belied his opinion of its merits. Vernet introduced this sublime Stabat a second time to the

dilettanti; to Vernet it is indebted for not being buried in the cloister for which it was written. It was crowned with the most perfect success; it was from this time considered to be the finest work of Pergolesi, and posterity will confirm that judgment, because, in the arts, that which is essential and beautiful never depends on the caprices of fashion.

The musical feeling of Vernet and his love for that art, interested him in the reception of Gretry, when he came to Paris. He augured well of his talent, he foretold his success, and often have I heard him say that some features in the face of Gretry, his delicate constitution, and more particularly some of his simple and expressive songs, mournfully recalled to his mind the immortal man to whom music owes its greatest powers, since it is to Pergolesi that it is indebted for that attention to the expression of the words, and for that perfection in the accompaniments of which this great man presented the models to his countrymen.

Vernet has constantly denied the tradition that Pergolesi died of poison. Great talents are like princes whose reign or whose actions have been rendered illustrious; men are pleased to deny them a natural death, and we think to increase the interest which their lives inspired, in attributing their departure from life to extraordinary circumstances. Pergolesi died in the arms of his

friend of an illness of which he languished for many months.

Vernet has been carried off from us by a fluxion in the chest. A good husband, good father, and excellent friend: if this great painter carries with him the regrets even of those who only knew him by his works, he has left a feeling yet more mournful to his friends: he might count among their number all those who habitually enjoyed his society, which he had the art of rendering interesting, on other accounts besides those which appertained to the art of which he was so great an ornament. There have been, he used to say, men superior to myself in almost every branch to which I have applied; but I may flatter myself that no individual has united them all to the same degree, and this may possibly entitle me to some advantage over them.

Memoirs or Essays on Music, by M. Gretry. One vol. in 8vo.

A work on music, by a composer who has attained so much success as M. Gretry, appears to promise very curious information. We love to follow a celebrated artist in the paths which he has trodden; we expect him to reveal the secrets of his art. The book which we have the honour of announcing to you, is, however, not so much a treatise on the art of music, as the history of the author's life, of his works and their success. The

interest which he has shed on the picture of the first years of his youth, appears to us attractive.

Born at Liege, of noble but poor parents, he entered life with a fond impression for music, with that sort of instinct to which it is so sweet and so natural to yield. The propensity which he discovered in his tender age, determined his father, who was first violin of the cathedral of Liege, to introduce him as a singing boy into the church to which he was attached. M. Gretry recounts with interesting simplicity his first studies, his first difficulties, and all the successes which a sonorous and flexible voice procured him; but this voice was lost, because he was not prevented from singing at the time when he arrived at the first period of puberty. The loss of his voice, which at that time he regretted so much, has enriched us with his talent as a composer. A mass in music, composed at the age of fourteen years, obtained for him a place in a college at Rome, founded by one of his countrymen. The happiness and glory of M. de Gretry's life commence with the epoch of his departure for the seminary of all the arts. His travels from Liege to Rome with a vender of relics, form by no means the least entertaining part of these memoirs. Cazali was his master at Rome, and in defiance of the eulogy which M. Gretry makes of his master, his name would never have been known to us, but for the celebrity of his pupil. We will not follow M. Gretry in the order of his studies; these details are formed to be read with pleasure;

and that their dryness might not tire the reader, he skilfully interweaves with them the adventures which befel him at Rome. Some essays of vocal and instrumental music soon procured him the honour of being engaged for interludes at the Theatre d'Alberti; the first was successful, the second failed; M. Gretry forgets to mention it, but he well remembers a very cold reception that he met with from the author of *La Bonne Fille*, to whom he was presented. The time of his residence at the college of his countrymen was near its close, his family could not assist him; an Englishman offered him a pension if he would follow him to London; he was going to set off with him, when M. Mellon, attached to the French legation, shewed him the partition of Rose and Colas. The perusal of this piece first gave him the desire of going to Paris; thus it is to the perusal of one of the first works of our Italian Theatre, that we owe the composer who has enriched it to such a degree, and a poem of M. Sedaine gave Gretry to France. He set off from Rome, leaving to his companions at the seminary several psalms and masses. He directed his course by Geneva, where he was induced to hope that he should get money by instructing scholars. The want of money, and the society of Voltaire, who promised frequently to see him, detained him some time in that city. M. de Voltaire did not love music; he never pardoned the Comic Opera for bringing deserters from *Zaïre* and *Mahomet*, but he

was not less anxious to send Gretry from Geneva to Paris.

On his arrival at that capital, he went first to the Italians; but like a man of genius brought up at Rome, he soon discovered that he should learn nothing at this theatre, and henceforth only frequented the French theatre. He felt that the declamation of a language is the first element, the first basis of the kind of music suited to that language; that by studying it, he should seize the just acceptation of its accents and their different gradations; and it is, perhaps, to this peculiar attention which he gave to it, that we are indebted for that truth and spirit which characterise all the good works of M. Gretry. In the mean while, the money that he had acquired at Geneva was nearly exhausted, and he could find no author who would confide a poem to his hands. Exhausted and without resources, he was going to leave Paris, when the Comte de Creutz, ambassador of Sweden, who had distinguished his talent, invites him to dine with M. Marmontel; this poet at length consents to give him his Huron. The music for it was composed with the greatest rapidity, it met with the most unqualified success, and from that instant decided on his reputation and his fortune. The remainder of M. Gretry's memoirs offers the history and critical examination of his other works. Without following him into these discussions, we shall simply observe, that he is not so severe to those of his compositions which have met with a

moderate success, as he is discriminating in the praises conferred on those which have perfectly succeeded. But a father always dissembles the faults of his children; and those which nature has less favourably treated, are sometimes the children of his preference.

Among the foreign anecdotes interspersed in this work, we shall be permitted to cite that which concerns the late Mr. Hales, author of the *Jealous Lover* and the *Judgment of Midas*; they are outlines of too much originality to be forgotten.

"This Englishman, whom the loss of his fortune had engaged to come and conceal his indigence at Paris, lived here in great sobriety; all the passions appeared in his instance, deadened to give strength to love alone. A woman of Paris squandered away the remainder of his fortune; then it was that he turned his attention to the stage, and that he assiduously frequented the coffee-house at the cellar of the Palais Royal. Hales spoke little, but always well; he never gave himself the trouble of saying what was known, and interrupted great talkers daily, by saying, *that is in print*. When he approved, he did so by a slight motion of the head; if pushed to extremities by stupid questions or remarks, he used to cross his legs, and closing them with all his might, he took a few grains of snuff which he always carried in his fingers, and looked another way.

"Compelled to fight with a man who insults him, after having lent him money which he could

not repay, Hales disarmed him, and said to him, with true English phlegm, "Were I not your debtor, I would kill you; if we had witnesses, I would wound you; we are alone, I pardon you."

"One day, at the house of a friend, he put on a certain article of wearing apparel, of which he had great need, and walked away. His friend, on returning to dress, misses the article in question. Mr. Hales only had entered the apartment, but no one dared suspect him: but at night meeting him at the cellar, and putting his hand on his thigh, he says to him, Are not those my breeches?—Yes, said the other, I had none.

"I have long seen him half naked; he never inspired pity; his noble countenance, his tranquillity seemed to say: I am a man, what can be wanting to me?"

December, 1790.

*Serious Challenge, or Letter of M. T*** to one of his Friends.*

Sir; to-morrow at noon, in the Bois de Boulogne, you will give me satisfaction for the look which you cast on me yesterday. To-morrow, Sir, that is to say, when time shall have given you the leisure to repent, and me that of being appeased, and shall leave neither of us the excuse of a first transport of passion, we will cut each other's throats, if you please, in cool blood. I believe you to be too brave to testify regret for the fault you have committed; and on my side, I think *too nobly* not to

wash it out in your blood or in my own. You think rightly, that in evincing to me disrespect you have given me a right over your life, or have acquired a right over mine. I should be far from pardoning you, even if you confessed to me that you acted inconsiderately; I should only add contempt to resentment. But if you succeed in killing me, I esteem you for it the more by anticipation, and not only pardon you your offence, but my death; for in reality I entertain for you neither hatred, nor disdain, and would not confer on many others the honour that I do you. Our fathers have instructed us, that there are a thousand occasions in life in which we cannot dispense with killing our best friend. I hope you will believe them on their word, and that, without hating each other, we shall not the less be each other's assassins. To plunge our sword in the bosom of an enemy to our country, is a low and vulgar action: we have the greatest inducements to excite us to it: but to kill a fellow citizen, a friend, for the slightest offence; *this, this, according to the feudal code of the Germans, our worthy ancestors*, is the height of grandeur and magnanimity. You know the place and hour. Be punctual.

T****.

FINIS.

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